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THE CONVERSION
OF A NEUTRAL

BEING AN OPEN LETTER BY M. EMILE PRÜM

EDITED AND WITH COMMENTS BY
RENÉ JOHANNET

HODDER & STOUGHTON
NEW YORK
GEORGE H. DORAN COMPANY

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY
RICHARD CLAY & SONS, LIMITED,
BRUNSWICK ST., STAMFORD ST., S.E.,
AND BUNGAY, SUFFOLK.

PREFACE

THE spiritual drama whose theatre was the mind of M. Prüm involved a multitude of actors, but only two protagonists—M. Prüm and the partner he himself selected: Herr Erzberger.

A Catholic, the leader of the Catholic party of Luxembourg, a Catholic in language, thought, and culture, and of German sympathies, a member of the Permanent Committee of the International Eucharistic Congresses, Commander of the Pontifical Order of St. Sylvester, honoured on every possible occasion by the pontifical favour, an ex-Deputy, Burgomaster of Clervaux, and by profession a manufacturer, M. Prüm has filled, and continues to fill, a prominent position in the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, where he has always been ready in the defence of Catholic liberties. Regarding the scholastic policy of the Prime

Minister, M. Eyschen, which was largely anti-clerical, as a mischievous importation from France, M. Prüm was, on account of his Catholicism, anti-French.

Then came the war, and the violation of the neutrality of Belgium and Luxembourg; accompanied, in Germany, by a state of exaltation which is not yet allayed. Then followed the German atrocities in Belgium. M. Prüm, who was favourably situated in the matter of observation, and particularly well informed, watched, observed, meditated, and drew his own conclusions.

The pamphlet here translated, which a curious hazard placed in our hands,[1] con-

[1] It first appeared in the form of articles published by two small Luxembourg newspapers—the *Clerfer Echo*, appearing in the town of which M. Prüm is the Burgomaster, and *Fortschritt*, appearing in Diekirch; it was then published separately in booklet form, but was immediately seized by the Luxembourg police, in accordance with the request of the German authorities. However, we were enabled to procure a copy of this booklet. Here is the title in full—

Die deutsche Kriegführung in Belgien und die Mahnungen Benedict XV, offenes Schreiben an Hrn. Math. Erzberger, Reichstagabgeordneter in Berlin. Von

tains the result of M. Prüm's meditations. After a careful perusal we are able to assert in all impartiality that M. Prüm has, by reason of his Catholicism, become anti-German.

By close association, M. Prüm was perfectly acquainted with the Catholic movement in modern Germany; he was assiduous in his attendance at the German Catholic Congresses, and he enjoyed personal relations with most of the leaders of the Centre; he was a contributor to those reviews which were the organs of the Centre, and he attentively followed the developments of this

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Emil Prüm, Bürgermeister zu Clerf (Grossherzogtum Luxemburg). Dietrich. Druck und Verlag des *Fortschritt.* Inhaber: P. Cariers, 1915.

Which, being translated, is—

The German conduct of hostilities in Belgium and the instructions of Benedict XV. Open letter to Herr Mathias Erzberger, member of the Reichstag, Berlin, by Emile Prüm, Burgomaster of Clervaux (Grand-Duchy of Luxembourg), Dietrich. Printing and publishing offices of *Fortschritt.* P. Cariers, proprietor, 1915.

The pamphlet contains forty-two pages.

Le Correspondant of April 25 and May 10, and *La Croix* of April 21–23, were the first papers to mention the "Prüm affair."

great party—developments which, as we shall see, he sometimes found far from reassuring.

It was not without reason that he selected Herr Erzberger as his interlocutor. His motives, we believe, are not difficult to divine.

Herr Erzberger represents the new, up-to-date "man of the Centre," who is very far removed from the old heroic and disinterested type.[1] Born in 1875, he entered the Reichstag in 1903, where the sometime primary schoolmaster from Swabia rapidly became the spokesman of his party, even of the Empire, which recently sent him to Italy as its semi-official ambassador. An indefatigable worker, a man of violent character and sanguine temperament, after desperately opposing the Imperial Government he very soon became its blind and unscrupulous servant. On introducing the budgets of the army, navy and colonies, he has often adopted a semi-Pan-Germanist attitude, which the war was to transform

[1] See Appendix.

into Pan-Germanism of the extreme and unconditional type.

It was to this representative German politician that M. Prüm addressed his memorial.

It is a defence of Catholicism and a statement of its doctrine; but it is also a generous and high-minded inquiry into the evolution of the German Centre, conducted by an admirer of that party.[1]

But we will leave the two protagonists to speak for themselves.

René Johannet.[2]

[1] We shall presently describe and comment upon the prosecutions instituted against M. Prüm by Herr Erzberger and the Public Prosecutor of Luxembourg.

[2] The Appendix and other comment by M. Johannet is translated from *La Conversion d'un Catholique Germanophile*, published by A. Quingnon, 16 Rue Alphonse Daudet, Paris.

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I

PAN-GERMANISM *versus* CHRISTENDOM

"The German Conduct of Hostilities in Belgium and the Instructions of Benedict XV."

An Open letter from M. Emile Prüm, Leader of the Catholic Party of Luxembourg, Member of the Permanent Committee of the International Eucharistic Congresses, to Herr Mathias Erzberger, Member of the Reichstag, Leader of the Catholic Centre Party of Germany.
(Seized and prohibited in Germany.)

Honoured Sir,

You have lately displayed a literary activity in the Press which, even beyond the frontiers of the German Empire, has

created some sensation, and has even caused a great deal of surprise. Rightly or wrongly, you are often regarded as the spokesman of the party of the Centre, which is to-day so influential in Germany, and which will remain influential so long as it renders disinterested services to the preponderant party of the landowners from the east of the Elbe.[1] Articles emanating from your pen are consequently endowed with an unusual significance.

You must not, therefore, be surprised that your numerous contributions to the Press have attracted considerable attention, even beyond the Empire, and have even more frequently provoked violent contradiction. You should know, in the first place, that the Catholics of the neutral States have been painfully impressed by your journalistic manifestations. In Switzerland there have been public and forcible protests against your manner of regarding affairs. From this you will understand that in Luxembourg, which is directly

[1] *Ost-Elbiertum:* the landowners from the east of the Elbe, considered as a body.

interested, people are inimical to you and your attitude.

With us, as in all countries, the Catholic cause has numerous and implacable enemies. It is therefore absolutely necessary to make sure that the Catholics of other countries shall not be reproached for such moral aberrations as those which you have been publicly displaying for months past, and which have met with no contradiction from your political co-religionists.

Undoubtedly the German Centre has lately undergone a modification. This great party, which sprang from the old Catholic faction in the Prussian Chamber,[1] has completely changed its nature.

By the terms of the official appeal of 1870, it was founded in the form of a "Union of the Catholic population of Germany" by Mgr. von Ketteler, von Mallinkrodt, the brothers Reichensperger, and Windthorst,[1] all men who never ceased to fight for right and justice, against the Bismarckian policy of blood and iron—to fight with inflexible constancy and

[1] See Appendix.

unshakable courage. Windthorst, the unforgettable leader of the Centre, remained until his last breath the faithful subject and councillor of his lawful Prince, the King of Hanover, dispossessed by Prussia, although he never allowed this to interfere in any way with those new duties which the reconstitution of the German Empire had imposed on him.

Abroad, then, we were accustomed, especially since the initiation of the *Kulturkampf*, to regard the Centre with admiration and respect, as the political representation of the German people, the knightly phalanx of the champions of truth, liberty, and justice. In the ex-Catholic Press of Germany, which is to-day merely the Press of the Centre, the organisation of the German Centre was continually represented as the model to be imitated by Catholics all the world over, and the *Kölnische Volkszeitung* [1] treated us at least

[1] The *Kölnische Volkszeitung* and the Berlin *Germania* are the two principal organs of the German Centre. The former represents and inspires the political tendencies of the new Centre.

once a fortnight to the famous *Germania docet.*

You will understand that under these circumstances the enemies of the Catholic cause in non-German countries are attempting to hold us Catholics responsible for the attitude which the German Centre has assumed in respect of the international questions of the day. These attacks have a semblance of justification so long as no formal protest has been made on our side.

I am very well aware that the present party of the Centre no longer wishes to be a Catholic party, and that the leaders of the party have ruthlessly refused to admit that "the Centre, in its political, social, and *cultural* activities, should remain essentially in agreement with Catholic teaching" (see Roeren, *Veränderte Lage des Zentrumsstreites* [1]). The Centre must now be regarded merely as an "interconfessional" German party, and purely Nationalist.

Nationalism, years ago condemned by

[1] There is a "Roeren affair" in the German Centre. See Appendix.

His Holiness Pius IX [1] as the greatest and most dangerous error of our time, has been promoted to the height of a sovereign precept by the Centre of to-day. Your recent publications are the irrefutable proof of this.

* * * * *

You have not merely, with the bulk of your party, approved, without restriction, of the violation of the neutrality of Belgium and Luxembourg, and therefore of the

[1] We asked a well-known theologian for an explanation of this passage. Here is his reply—

"The only nationalism (if any) which has to my knowledge been condemned by the Church is that nationalism of the 'immoralist' type, in whose eyes the love of country would legitimise every species of crime. This is precisely the doctrine and the abominable practice of Germany. But the term nationalism would here be extremely equivocal, for in its legitimate sense it signifies normal patriotism, which is a virtue commanded and blessed by God and the Church."—B.M. One may also refer the reader to an article by Canon Gandeau in *La Foi Catholique*, April–May 1915: *Le danger pour l'Eglise est en Allemagne.* See also *Pages actuelles: Rectitude et perversion du sens national*, by C. Jullian, Professor in the College of France.

violation of all treaties; you have gone much, much further than this. Germany, you maintain, in one of your last published articles, can no longer allow any independent State to divide her western frontier from the Channel. The German Army must not have suffered such great losses in vain; so you recommend the eventual annexation to Germany of Belgium, and therefore of Luxembourg.

In your last article in the Berlin *Tag* you even make this hideous assertion: "The more pitiless and cruel war is, the more humane it is, because it is then more quickly brought to a satisfactory end." [1] So, you say, the Germans must use all possible means of destroying their adversaries. Certainly the aim of all warfare is to subdue the army of the enemy, and this is why the antagonists are permitted to inflict on one another the greatest possible injury. Nevertheless, this theory is valid only for military operations. But you, Sir, contrary to all hitherto admitted

[1] This is not original. See note to p. 35.—B.M.

ideas of international law, would extend this harsh necessity of warfare to everything and every one on hostile territory. Thus you express the desire to see London completely annihilated, if only such a thing were possible. To your thinking nothing and no one should be spared; neither women, nor children, nor the aged, nor public buildings, nor churches, nor private dwellings, nor any other kind of property. All may be destroyed, provided victory is achieved. And after this you would still pass for a Catholic—for the representative and leader of the German Catholics, in a party which—to be sure—is interconfessional!

* * * * *

I am perfectly well aware that the point of view which you adopt is that of the most eminent modern military writers,[1] for whom the terrorisation of the civil

[1] M. Prüm evidently means to refer to German military writers, for the point of view which he rightly condemns has never been adopted by French or British writers, nor by French or British armies in the field.—B.M.

population of occupied territories is one of the chief necessities of modern warfare. And so a magnificent country, which only eight months ago was, relatively to its area, the richest and most thickly populated country in the world, has now in many parts been transformed into a wilderness of ruins, while a great proportion of its inhabitants have been reduced to mendicity. It seems absolutely puerile to seek to contradict this fact at the present moment, or to endeavour to conceal it from the German people; it is irrefutably established in the eyes of the whole world. The only thing to be done was to admit the facts officially and to extricate oneself from the business to the best of one's ability. If, from the midst of a people of seven million souls, we must select one individual piece of testimony—confirmed by so many graves, so many ruins!—let us take the Christmas Pastoral Letter of that most scholarly of all contemporary Princes of the Church, Cardinal Mercier, or the Easter *mandamus* of the pious Bishop of Namur, President of the Inter-

national Eucharistic Congresses, so revered in both hemispheres.

The point of view of the military writers in this connection is perfectly comprehensible. They have only one object in sight, and that is of a strategic order. For the rest they care nothing. But you, Sir, who are the representative of the German people and its general interests, including its non-military interests—you ought to regard matters from a very different point of view.

Please do not misinterpret my words. I have the profoundest respect for the intense patriotism of the German people, and I unreservedly admire the spirit of absolute union displayed, in this great war, by all classes of the people. But we must not forget that the war is merely a transient phenomenon. However long it may continue—whether it last eighteen months,[1] as Giolitti will have it, or three years, as Lord Kitchener declares—peace will at length return, and then, even in the obvious interest of your Germany, there must be a reconciliation between

[1] Written in March 1911.

the peoples. *But how will such a reconciliation be possible if men in your position, to whom, moreover, strategic considerations are absolutely foreign, invoke principles which can only end in digging an impassable gulf of hatred between Germany and the rest of Europe?* Quite lately Germany has again conducted a most instructive experiment as regards the results of organised national hatred.

Just as Germany to-day bids Germans "Hate the English!" so yesterday she cried "Hate the Belgians!" and the day before yesterday "Hate the Poles and all that is Polish!"

As to the results of the anti-Polish policy of Prussia during the present war, here is the evidence of the *Historisch-Politische Blätter*,[1] No. 135[3]. At the beginning of June 1914 a "German Day" was celebrated,[2] when violent attacks were made

[1] *Historisch-Politische Blätter für das Katholische Deutschland*, a review established at Munich in 1838. It has a large circulation as an organ of the Centre.

[2] A day devoted to national manifestations in the Press and on the platform.

upon the *Polentum* and the dangers to which the State was exposed therefrom. It was asserted that a whole series of Draconian laws must be drafted against the Poles, to increase the forces of Germanisation in the frontier provinces of the East.[1] But then the war suddenly broke out, and with it the need was felt of a reconciliation with the Poles; not only with those Poles who were German subjects, but also with the Russian Poles. In circles where only a few weeks before a threatening attitude had been adopted toward the Poles, one now heard nothing but the most frantic praises of this people. The long widowhood of the archdiocese of Posen-Gnesen, which had become a veritable chronic malady, was terminated with surprising promptitude.[2] The problem of

[1] Silesia, Posen, West and East Prussia.

[2] For many years the German Empire refused to install at Posen the candidate nominated by the Holy See. Berlin wanted to appoint a "Germanising" archbishop to this imperfectly subdued district. The Holy See, which in such matters puts the welfare of the population first, made the "mistake" of recommending for this post a dignitary who was too Polish for the German Emperor. Mgr.

this appointment was solved to the satisfaction of all parties by the nomination of the venerable Bishop-Coadjutor, Mgr. Likowski, since deceased. The severities of the anti-Polish colonisation law were instantly mitigated, and the priests were even permitted to teach the catechism in Polish.

Last July the German mobilisation took place, and in August a pamphlet was published in Polish which was intended to promote the newly adopted policy. Its title is: "The Resurrection of Poland," and it is "got up" in a highly artistic manner.

The first page is devoted to a coloured reproduction of the Virgin of Czenstochowa; at her feet kneel a German soldier, a young girl, and a couple of aged folk. To the right of the Mother of God is displayed the portrait of the German Emperor, and underneath are these words in Polish: "Every Catholic Pole must know that I have always respected his religion, and

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Likowski's successor is the youthful Canon of Posen Cathedral, Mgr. Dalbor, known for his openly Polish sympathies.

that no one will place any obstacle in the way of the accomplishment of his religious duties" (Address of the Kaiser to the Chapter of Gnesen, August 5, 1905). To the left of the Madonna is the portrait of Leo XIII, with these words, which he addressed to the Kaiser in the course of an audience: "I promise and assure Your Imperial Majesty in the name of all the Catholics of the German States and of the divers nationalities, that they will always be the faithful subjects of the German Emperor and the King of Prussia."

Certain Polish newspapers believe that this pamphlet, in whose publication the German authorities had a hand, was packed in the knapsack of every German soldier, so that he might distribute it to the Polish population of Russia. We must not lightly reject this statement; for the contents, as well as the illustration, lay stress upon the passivity of Russia as regards the Poles and the Uniats.

However, all efforts undertaken with a view to conciliating the Poles were in vain. The past, and the recent anti-Polish cam-

paigns in Germany, could not be effaced. The Russian Poles made common cause with Tsarism, and even formed special Polish legions for the protection of the Russian Empire. It is said that these legions have received large numbers of Polish volunteers from America and other parts of the world. In an article entitled "The Russian Poles and the War" the *Kreuzzeitung*[1] arrives at the conclusion that according to the experiences of these last few months "the Russo-Polish item must be erased once for all from the credit side of the great book of Germany." Such were the results of the anti-Polish campaign undertaken by the Pan-Germanists.

* * * * *

We must, of course, recognise that the German Centre and its Press have played no part in this campaign, which is so contrary to the accepted interests of the State. In conformity with the traditions of Windthorst, the Centre has always pronounced in favour of equality of treat-

[1] A Protestant Conservative journal published in Berlin.

ment for the Poles. Whether, in this struggle for Right and Justice, the Centre might not have made a more energetic use of its Parliamentary influence—then very powerful—in favour of this oppressed nation, is a question which must be set aside. In any case the Press of the Centre, even the Press of the Augustinian Union,[1] has gravely offended against the Catholic people of Belgium, and such an attitude has caused the most painful feeling among Catholics all the world over. To be sure, it does seem to-day as though a sort of shame and remorse were felt in "Centrist" circles in respect of the cruelties committed against the Belgians. It is irrefutably demonstrated that there was not a single organisation of *francs-tireurs* in all Belgium, and, moreover, that no such organisation could have been constituted, considering the conditions of overwhelming suddenness which characterised the German invasion.

While the German armies were making their way into Belgium, fantastic stories,

[1] The *Augustinusverband* is an organisation of the Catholic newspapers of the Centre. See Appendix.

by means of the Press, were spread abroad to the four corners of the Empire: stories of gouged-out eyes, bellies cut open, and Hussars burned alive. These rumours were propagated everywhere, and in this way the German people was worked up into a dangerous state of excitement. Can you, Sir, cite a single case in which these tales of brigands, accepted as worthy of credence by the uncritical crowd, have been rendered in some degree credible by statements of date and locality, of the name of the person responsible, or the pretended victim? Yet the results of this campaign have been terrible.

The past cannot be retrieved: yet it will be necessary, as in the case of the Poles, to submit to a reconciliation between Germany and the other peoples. Many injustices have been committed which even to-day might be repaired without the sacrifice of anything that matters. Would not such reparation hasten the advent of this reconciliation, and favour the possibility of such a thing?

* * * * *

During the month of August thousands and thousands of persons belonging to the civil population of Belgium were led away to captivity in Germany. They are for the most part poor peasants and fathers of families. For seven months now[1] they have been separated from wives and children. In their own country, even where the houses have not been burned, the poverty is unspeakably great. Spring is approaching, and with it the necessity of labour in the fields. Nearly all the horses have been taken, the cows and bullocks requisitioned, so that the teams needful for ploughing are almost everywhere lacking. Even under these mournful circumstances, however, the presence of the father and the breadwinner of the family would be absolutely indispensable. Ought not these poor prisoners at last to be sent to their homes? If certain of them should be the object of a definite accusation, they could be brought before the competent tribunal, and, however trivial the offence of which they might be found guilty, sub-

[1] Written early in 1915.

jected to the military laws in all their severity. Otherwise let them be sent back to their own country. Would it not be fitting that the party of the Centre, the heirs of von Ketteler, von Mallinkrodt, the Reichenspergers, and Windthorst — those knights and champions of Right and Justice—should intervene in this matter, appealing to public opinion as well as to the constituted authorities?

In place of assuming this duty, which is so perfectly in keeping with the glorious and time-honoured traditions of the old Centre, you, Sir, would heap ruin upon ruin, and would even destroy the city of London. Do you not see, then, that one day the reconciliation between Germany and the British Empire will become an imperious necessity? Do not forget, as a Catholic, and the representative of the German Catholics, how hospitably England has received, and is still receiving, the victims of the German *Kulturkampf*.

Among so many examples we will mention only one: the German Jesuits banished from your country have found in the British

Empire their widest field of action; they administer, with the most fruitful results, the arch-diocese of Bombay. The Indian Government and its officials have repeatedly figured as the cordial benefactors of the German mission. From the considerable payments which England makes him for the stipends of military chaplains the Archbishop is able to deduct sufficient to support more than one poor mission. For its schools and charitable institutions the Jesuit mission receives generous subventions from the State. The sons of Hindoo princes, by permission of the British authorities, are often pupils in the Jesuit colleges. When the Archbishop travels through his diocese the official *train de luxe* is placed at his disposal. This benevolent attitude of the Indian Government, which the war has in no wise modified, increases the prestige of the German missionaries in the eyes of the natives.

What is true of Bombay is true of all parts of the British Empire, which contains 400,000,000 subjects. Everywhere the Catholic Church is accorded the com-

pletest liberty. It is free to develop its congregational activities, and it is able to do something which for the German Catholics must be an urgent necessity, yet which is for the moment entirely outside the region of possibilities: it is able to found free Catholic educational institutions, from the university to the primary school, and to count on generous State support. And you, Sir, wish to destroy the city of London, and if possible the whole British Empire? As for Belgium, the country of complete religious liberty, where Lazarites, Brothers of the Christian Colleges, Ursulines, and other German congregations maintain flourishing educational establishments, which are entirely German, though forbidden in the German Empire: you want, without more ado, to annex Belgium? But if you do so where in future will the victims of the German anti-clerical laws find an asylum?

* * * * *

As a Catholic—and you still wish to be regarded as such, despite the "interconfessionalism" of your party—it is not fitting

that you should stir up popular hatred. Of course, I know how widespread this hatred has become in Germany to-day, how blind and furious it is. Its sinister rumour rises up to us from an ocean of newspapers. Let us cite one example among a thousand—

In an article entitled "The German Hatred," published by Pastor Schiller in the *Vossische Zeitung*,[1] we read, after the preliminary remark that "the Germans are finding themselves obliged, in the course of this war of nations, to modify their ideas and their methods"—

"The domain of morality itself is subject to this process of evolution. Formerly we regarded hatred as immoral. If any one referred to the subject we repulsed him indignantly, and put him in his place. To-day if we know anything at all, it is that we *may* hate, that we *ought* to hate. Lissauer's *Hymn of Hate*[2]—hatred of Eng-

[1] A Protestant Liberal newspaper, published in Berlin.

[2] Here is the best-known verse of the *Hymn of Hate*—

"For Frenchman or Russian we care not a jot:
A blow for a blow, a shot for a shot!

land—corresponds absolutely to our feelings, and the depths of the popular German mind. All that may be said to us on this subject will fall upon deaf ears, and we shall strike away all hands outstretched to hold us back. It is not our fault. *We must hate* this lying race."

When a man who by his vocation is required to proclaim the gospel of love and pity of our divine Master and Saviour Jesus Christ believes himself licensed to express himself publicly in this manner, what will the disciples of Zarathustra say, who transmute all values and who would shatter into fragments the tables of the old law of love and pity, to set up in its place a new ideal of conscience, an ideal of pitilessness and hardness?

* * * * *

At the beginning of the war, when the first news of the terrible things that were

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But our hate for you shall ne'er be done;
Hate on the sea and hate by land,
Hate of the brain and hate of the hand,
We hate as one, we love as one,
We have one foe and one alone—
England!"

happening in Belgium was filling the whole civilised world with horror, Father Vaughan, S.J., brother of the late Cardinal Vaughan, Archbishop of Westminster, in a sermon delivered in London, attributed the characteristics of the war as the Germans were waging it, as well as their attitude toward the civil population of Belgium, to the influence of the Nietzschean philosophy. The remarks of this famous preacher, regarded as the greatest religious orator in modern England, provoked the most violent contradictions from the Press of the German Centre. Incontestably it must be granted that the form in which the words of the English Jesuit were transmitted to Germany was to a great extent deserving of the heated denials of the German Press. A Catholic, and above all a priest, should never, under any circumstances, forget that he is required to respect those persons who incarnate the sovereignty of the State, even if an enemy State be in question. Infringements of this precept can only envenom the minds of those who regard their oath of allegiance as a serious matter,

which is essentially the position of the German Catholics. As a matter of fact, we learned later on that Father Vaughan had not uttered the words which were attributed to him, and which had been rightly censured. But, however this may be, there can be no doubt in the matter: the philosophy of Nietzsche does exert an established influence upon the popular German mind, and when, in foreign countries, and even in the official publications of the French Government, it is asserted that the German people has since 1870 undergone so great an intellectual transformation that it is almost unrecognisable, this assertion must be regarded as founded on fact, and the reality is to be attributed to the influence of Nietzsche.

* * * * *

Nietzsche, the son of a pastor, who lost his mental balance through too deep a study of his peculiar subject, has become the typical philosopher of modern Germany. The intellectual atmosphere of Germany is imbued with Nietzschean terms and ideas. The spirit of pride inculcated by Nietzsche,

together with his "master-morality" and his theory of the superman, has, above all, pervaded the younger generation. Self-consciousness, energy, and absence of scruples—this, it appears, is the loftiest ideal, and the most recent. This is an inevitable result of the diffusion of an atheism based on the principles of evolution. If it is true that the law of the struggle for life operates throughout all Nature, and that perfection cannot be attained unless the weaker be crushed and annihilated by the stronger, why should it not be true of men also, and why should not the sole moral law be that enunciated by Nietzsche, when he celebrates "the boundless will to power"?

This intellectual evolution has been greatly favoured by a universal militarism, and by a propaganda of "free-thought," superbly organised and widely diffused in the German manner. Subterranean at first, the activity of the free-thinking and "monistic" [1] circles finally constituted an

[1] Monism is a philosophic theory widely diffused in Germany, according to which there exists only *one*

avowed and visible intellectual force throughout Germany. The Centre took practically no notice of this development.

No doubt free-thought has displayed great activity in the Latin countries also. But in these countries it often lacks the German solidity. It must also be realised that the "free-thought" of the Latin countries, unlike the "free-thought" of Germany, adopted anti-militarism and international pacifism as its basis, so that in France the war has destroyed much of its credit. German free-thought, on the other hand, is saturated with Nietzschism, and has placed itself at the service of Pan-Germanism; its ideal is Germanic neo-Paganism, and its cult a national Pan-German idolatry. This essential contrast enables us to understand the bitter hostility which the free-thought and freemasonry of

---

substance, whence everything is derived—all matter, all thought, etc. Haeckel, who signed the manifesto of the "Ninety-three," and is well known to have falsified photographic documents in the interest of his doctrines, is the most celebrated representative of this school, which is in some respects a renewal of Pantheism.

the Latin countries, and above all of Italy, entertain toward Germany.

For reasons of opportunism, Pan-Germanism has in many instances preserved the old traditional Christian formulæ. In conformity with the teaching of Nietzsche, the audacious transmuter of all accepted ideas, a new Pagan meaning has been infused into these Christian formulæ. In this way free-thought itself has retained the war-cry inherited from Gustavus Adolphus: *Gott mit uns*. The reader will the better understand the manner in which Nietzschean free-thought effects the transmutation of this pious Christian watchword by reading the following poem, which has enjoyed a large circulation in Germany—

THE GERMAN GOD

The foes of Germany, full of irony, inquire:
"You Germans call upon God, and pray to Him
To aid you in the battle.
So you have a God of your own,
Whom we know not,
A God on your side?"
"Yes," cries all Germany, "and if you know him not
We shall tell you his name,

The God who speaks through our guns,
The God who shatters your fortresses,
Who roars in the sea by our cliffs,
Who hovers in the heavens with our aeroplanes,
The God of our swords, who fills you with affright,
He is the same Almighty Spirit
Who through the centuries
Has hovered over Germany,
Who weaves and mixes all our lives,
And on whom we depend.

"Odin, the ancient vagabond of the clouds,
The Odin of our fathers, it is He and no other.
In His name did Walter [1] sing,
In His name did Martin Luther battle,
The God who with us endured poverty,
Yet who in the gloom remained keen and radiant
In Paul Gerhart and Johann Sebastian Bach,
The God with whom Frederick lay down on the
field of battle,
And who, in the end, brought us the new day;
Who sent upon our land
The Dawn:
Lessing and Kant,
Until the sun rose in the firmament:
Johann Wolfgang Goethe,
And all the spirits,
Immortal masters,
About him!

[1] Walter von der Vogelweide, died 1228, the famous German minnesinger. A Pan-Germanist before his time, and highly appreciative of the things of this world, he also sang with tenderness of the Virgin Mother and her sorrows.

All this was of Him,
The God to whom we cry to-day,
Who feeds with a sacred fire
The holy spirit of Germany,
It is He whom we must confess."

WILL VESPER.

German free-thinkers even go to the length of maintaining that the Nietzschean spirit has assumed the leadership of the German people in this great war, and the *Zeitgeist*, the organ of the German Monistic Union, expressed itself as follows quite at the beginning of hostilities—

"The men who to-day are fighting like lions and sacrificing themselves like heroes, who, with empty stomachs, like martyrs or ascetics, go to the front impelled by a secret will, throwing themselves into the arms of death and mutilation, and those too who, at home, silently and modestly, undertake with gladness a tenfold labour—all these millions of men of the old German rock, strong, tenacious, with an iron sense of duty, are nourished by this intellectual bread: the conceptions of Nietzsche." In Nietzsche the *Zeitgeist* sees the man whose

seed is springing up in magnificence, for "he has shown us that earthliness,[1] love of self, cruelty, and hardness are precious auxiliaries of culture; he has rid us of the spirit of other-worldliness, of altruism and humility."

Where, in the philosophy of Nietzsche, are we to find a barrier to oppose to no matter what aberration or violence, if good and evil are only obsolete opinions, concomitants of the moment's profit or loss, and if, as Nietzsche says, "all these pallid atheists, anti-Christians, immoralists, nihilists, sceptics, ephectics and hectics" are not of themselves ready to become "free spirits"; if the true and ideal freedom of the spirit resides in the motto of the

[1] *Leiblichkeit.* It is one of those terms of the Nietzschean vocabulary which are not very easy to translate. It means, alternatively, or simultaneously, if one may say so, *corporality*, *terrestriality*. Roughly speaking, it signifies the quality of something that is real, close at hand, tangible, as opposed to something remote and immaterial; for instance, the body and the earth as opposed to the soul and the heavens. It implies an impassioned submission and adhesion to the domination and the brutal powers of nature, as opposed to the Christian ideal of renunciation.

assassins: "Nothing is true; all things are permitted!"

Is it astonishing, then, that men nourished on the moral bread of the Nietzschean ideal, as the *Zeitgeist* has it, should leave behind them nothing but corpses and ruins, when they cross the frontiers of their country, to fall upon a people in no way prepared for war, almost without weapons, which is quite unexpectedly pointed out to them as their enemy?

You will doubtless object, with good reason, that a large section of the German people, and above all the Catholics, have hitherto been preserved from any direct infection of Nietzschean philosophy, and that they have remained faithful to the Christian creed of their fathers. This is perfectly true, and all the countries occupied by the German troops will confirm the fact.

We, too, in Luxembourg have witnessed the solid, manly piety of the Catholic German soldiers, and we have often found this piety instructive. But you will admit that the trend of the German people does not depend on those brave Catholic soldiers

who piously recite their rosary in the trenches, nor on those who, exposed to the constant peril of death, hold fast to a loftier ideal of love for God and man, and "always, always read in the old sacred Book how the Lord has shown Himself faithful, and how He has loved us." [1]

So the assertion of the *Zeitgeist* with regard to the conduct of the war by Nietzsche appears, as a matter of fact, the most probable. The mentality of the cultivated circles and the ruling circles in modern Germany has turned neither to Catholicism nor to a religion subjected to ecclesiastical discipline. One might go on speaking for ever of the backward position of the German Catholics in public life. The political representation of the German Catholics may well perform the collar-work in dragging the chariot of Empire, especially when the road is steep and rugged, but the Nationalist and interconfessionalist Centre is not allowed to seat itself therein.[2] I refuse to enter any further into this question, and

[1] Passage from a German hymn.

[2] See Appendix.

will content myself with referring to those numerous writings which are full of lamentations on the subject of "equality," especially those of Hans Rost and Bachem.

Most lamentable of all is the spirit of servility by which the Centre has debased itself, as a result of the ineffectual position to which it has for some generations been condemned. This frame of mind, which is utterly incomprehensible to the foreigner, is so firmly established that Professor Martin Spahn, at the spectacle of "the might of German life, which derives its energies from the past," and of that *Ost-Elbiertum*[1] "which, with imposing strength, offers an increasing opposition, as of a breakwater, to the waves of Radicalism," falls into an ecstasy so amazing that like St. Peter of old upon Mount Tabor he seems totally oblivious of the existence and the merits of the Centre, which is his own party.[2] For the rest, even if the political

[1] The party of the junkers, or landowners, of the country to the east of the Elbe.

[2] Concerning the tendencies of Herr Spahn before and during the war, see Appendix.

representatives of the German Catholics were granted the position which is rightfully theirs, the influence of Nietzsche's philosophy upon the conduct of the war would encounter little or no opposition.

Practically there is hardly any difference between your manner of conceiving the conduct of hostilities and that of the Nietzschean doctrine, with its "master-morality," and its theory of the superman.

In No. 30 of *Der Tag*, 1913, you express yourself thus: "In warfare the greatest absence of scruples, if one sets about the matter intelligently, coincides, in reality, with the greatest humanity.[1] When we are in a position to wipe out London by a method in our possession, it is more humane to do so than to allow a single one of our German comrades to shed his blood on the field of battle, for so radical a cure would bring about peace as quickly as possible. Hesitation, temporising, sentimentality and consideration are unpardonable weaknesses.

[1] This axiom of Lieber's, cited by von Hartmann, is repeated by every German as though it were his own. It dates, apparently, from 1870–76.—B.M.

A decided, unscrupulous action—a display of efficacy, and victory follows."

How can you conciliate this declaration with the strict instructions which have been given us by Benedict XV, notably in the first consistorial address of January 22, which the Centre, for that matter, passed over in all but absolute silence?

In this address Benedict XV laid down, very clearly and unequivocally, the principles which guide and unite all Catholics—

"*It is never permissible, for any reason whatever, to violate justice.*"

The Pope "condemns all injustice, on whichever side it may be practised." This declaration of Benedict XV's ought to appear superfluous, for the principle recalled by the Holy Father is so obviously true that there could hardly be found one Catholic in all the world who would deny its justice and its obligatory character.

Yet it is this very obviousness which makes it clear with what intention the Pope considered it necessary to recall, so seriously, with such solemnity, a precept so simple—one might say so commonplace.

He wished to reject and condemn the interested sophistries by which certain persons had attempted to obscure this inconvenient truth.

Let us compare the pontifical address with the well-known declaration made by Chancellor von Bethmann-Hollweg in the Reichstag on August 4, 1914. Here it is, word for word—

"Gentlemen, we are confronted by a necessity, and necessity knows no law. Our troops have occupied Luxembourg, and have, perhaps, already entered Belgium. Gentlemen, this is contrary to international law. The French Government, it is true, declared to Brussels that it would respect the neutrality of Belgium so long as the enemy should do so. We know, however, that France was ready for aggression. France could wait; we could not. A French attack upon our flank on the Lower Rhine might have been fatal to us. Thus we have been compelled to override the justifiable protests of Luxembourg and the Belgian Government.

"For the offence—I speak plainly—for

the offence which we are thereby committing against them we shall indemnify them as soon as our military object is attained."

It remains to be proved that Germany, the only country completely prepared for war, and the first, moreover, to declare war, was confronted by any necessity. In any case, one thing will be energetically denied here in Luxembourg: namely, that the French Army was the first to violate our neutrality and to precipitate hostilities.

On the morning of August 3 a proclamation from the German military authorities to the people of Luxembourg was posted up in the city of Luxembourg by the invading German troops. Here is the text of this proclamation—

"All the steps taken to preserve peace by His Majesty the Emperor and King have been in vain. The enemy has forced Germany to draw the sword. France having commenced hostilities against the German Army on the Luxembourg soil, despite the neutrality of Luxembourg, His Majesty finds himself constrained by the most pressing emergency to the painful

necessity of ordering the German Army, and in especial the Eighth Army Corps, to occupy Luxembourg."

The information which gave occasion for this proclamation was false. The entire population of Luxembourg is witness to this fact.

* * * * *

However this may be, the violation of the neutrality of Belgium and Luxembourg is, as the Chancellor of the Empire admitted, a patent infringement of treaties and *a crying injustice.* Consequently it should not under any pretext have been allowed to occur.

"*It is never permissible, for any reason whatsoever, to violate justice.*" In these words does the Pope reject the aphorism of the Chancellor : "*Necessity knows no law.*"

Necessity may well absolve a man from the observance of positive laws, in proportion as he is subject to an external and irresistible constraint. But he may never, under any circumstances, violate justice itself. You and your party should never have lost sight of this principle.

Do not argue that reasons of State, or State interests, can give a character of necessity to the perpetration of injustice. This is not a Christian principle; it is utterly Pagan. In all times men have appealed to it in order to legitimise the most arbitrary atrocities and acts of violence: notably the persecution of Christianity. At the time of the *Kulturkampf* the Centre fought most courageously and with the greatest energy against the Pagan principle that reasons of State legitimise everything. There is not one moral code for States and one for individuals. It is never, under any circumstances, permissible to commit an evil, criminal action which is forbidden by natural law. This command applies to the State also, no matter what advantage the community might derive from its violation.

Catholic as I am, I may well remind you that the contrary view was expressly condemned, long before the days of Benedict XV, by the *Syllabus* of Pius IX, of which the 64th proposition reads as follows—

"The violation of an oath, however

sacred it may be (the neutrality of Belgium and Luxembourg was guaranteed by the oath of the head of the State, and also by the King of Prussia), and any action contrary to the eternal law of God, are not always blameworthy. On the contrary, they are permissible and even praiseworthy when their motive is love of country." [1]

The infallible authority of the Church has solemnly condemned this doctrine by the mouth of His Holiness Pius IX.

I can very well understand that non-Catholics do not regard this doctrinal decision as obligatory, and that in public and political life they admit no other moral prescription than reasons of State, as they are called. Perhaps I do not blame them. But you, Sir, and with you all the party

[1] Here is the Latin text of this proposition, inserted in the *Syllabus:* it is extracted from the consistorial address pronounced by Pius IX on April 20, 1849—

" Tum cujusque sanctissimi juramenti violatio, tum quaelibet scelesta flagitiosaque actio sempiternae legi repugnans non solum haud est improbanda, verum etiam omnino licita summisque laudibus efferenda, quando id pro amore patriae agatur." (See B. Gandeau, *Le danger pour l'Eglise est en Allemagne,* in *La Foi Catholique,* April–May 1915.)

of the Centre, the Catholic representatives of the German people—how could you, at a moment of the world's history so decisive for the future of Germany and Europe, neglect, without more ado, the doctrinal decisions of the Church, to give your unreserved approval to a principle so lamentable and so heathenish as the above? Must we regard this as one more result of that interconfessionalism which believes that "in its political, social, and *cultural* activities the Centre need not be inspired by the principles of Catholic teaching?" This essential question cropped up last year, in November, while the Reichstag was sitting. The spokesman of Social Democracy profited by the occasion to formulate the precise reservations with which his party regarded the question of equity and justice where neutrals were concerned. The Centre, as far as I know, made no reference to the subject.

Of course, no one could expect that the Centre and the German Catholics would allow themselves, on the occasion of this violent crisis, which had occurred so sud-

denly, to be outdone in patriotism, heroism, disinterestedness, and war-like spirit even, by any other party whatsoever, or any other section of the nation. Nevertheless, the Centre under any circumstances ought to have preserved intact the *equitable point of view*. The words of the Bible remain eternally true: *Justitia firmatur solium.* It is Justice which upholds the throne (Prov. xvi. 12), and Germany, too, may avail herself of the traditional motto of the Emperor of Austria: *Justitia regnorum fundamentum.*

The ideas which you uphold are in yet another way, and on a very essential point, directly in contradiction to the solemn instructions of the Holy Father. You would have it that the conduct of hostilities abroad should be effected with as few mitigations as possible, and with the greatest possible severity, and you go so far as to speak of the destruction of entire cities. Benedict XV, on the contrary, in his consistorial address, prays and adjures belligerents who have crossed their own frontier to spare the civil population altogether.

"It is to be feared," he says, "that the violence of attack often exceeds all measure. We here appeal to the sense of humanity of those who have crossed the frontiers of enemy nations, to conjure them that the invaded regions shall not be devastated further than is strictly demanded by the necessities of military occupation, and, what is even more important, that the inhabitants shall not, without actual necessity, be offended in respect of that which they hold most dear, as their temples of religion, the ministers of God, and the rights of religion and of faith." [1]

It is indubitable that the fears expressed by the Pope, and his prayers and adjurations, refer directly to Belgium, and the deplorable circumstances which accompanied the German invasion, together with the misfortunes which have in so brief a space befallen a country lately so flourishing.

Even though the Holy Father has not expressly said as much, every one must

[1] From the French translation published in *La Croix*, January 25, 1915, which gives the whole address.

recognise that "the violence of the attack upon the Belgian people has exceeded all measure," and that "the occupied regions have been devastated to a greater extent than was demanded by the necessities of military occupation."

However, Benedict XV did not intend that there should be any doubt as to what he really did wish to say in his solemn and paternal instructions : he expressly declared in his speech that in this connection "his solicitude was in the first place for Belgium," and that "his thoughts lingered with the most profound tenderness about his well-beloved Belgian people." He refers here to his letter to Cardinal Mercier, a letter which reached its destination only with the greatest difficulty, and in which the Pope himself draws a heartbreaking picture of the suffering of the Belgian people.

It is of the utmost urgency that the German Catholics should once for all take up a definite position as regards this terrible matter of the German hostilities in Belgium, and their consequences. You, Sir, uphold

the idea, which before the war was diffused by the Pan-Germanist Press, and is to-day almost universally adopted, that the economic, political and national evolution of Germany demands the annexation of Belgium to the Empire.

Abroad, to-day, Germany is often enough accused of having undertaken the present war merely in order to extend her western frontier to the sea by the acquisition of Belgium. Your statements in the Press lend at least an aspect of probability to this serious accusation.

The eventual fate of our common neighbour, like our own, is as yet hidden in the future. In any case, above all if the destiny of the neutral countries is to follow the course which your ideas and your desires would indicate, the reconciliation of the Belgian people with the German will become an imperious necessity, particularly for Germany herself.

* * * * *

The German Catholics are precisely those who would have been best qualified to work for a reconciliation of this kind, if

they could have agreed, or even if they could to-day agree, to respect and consider the legitimate feelings of their Belgian co-religionists. How bitter the feelings of the Belgians are to-day is shown in a striking fashion by the Lent *mandamus* of the Bishop of Namur, Mgr. Heylen—

"That many souls, in the midst of the terrible sufferings which are oppressing them, are experiencing cruel temptations, we were able everywhere to perceive for ourselves, in the course of our visit to the devastated communes. On all sides people complained to us: 'Why should it be Belgium in particular that is so cruelly ravaged, so mortally wounded? Is this the reward for our always unshaken attachment to the Catholic faith, for all the sacrifices we have made for works of piety and charity, for our fidelity to the Apostolic Holy See, for our ever-cordial hospitality to the priests and religious exiled from Germany no less than from France? What has it profited us that we have almost exhausted our energies in founding innumerable establishments which afford a purely

Catholic instruction and education, that we have consecrated our sons, as freely as, and relatively speaking more freely than any other people, to the propagation of faith among the heathen?' They said, again: 'Our priests are massacred or subjected to terrible outrages; our churches are destroyed or used for secular purposes; our goods have become the prey of war more frequently and in greater measure than have the goods of the wicked. Why these hard trials? How can the just God permit them?' And then, often enough, a murmur escapes from their lips, even an involuntary accusation against the Deity." [1]

To this description of the feelings of his diocesans, Mgr. Heylen added paternal counsels of patience and fidelity, as Cardinal Mercier had already done, when, in his *mandamus*, which is to-day a historic document, he reminded the Belgian people in such touching phrases of the example of Job and his pious resignation.

[1] The authentic text of this *mandamus* not having entered France, the above is translated from the French translation of the German version.

If, according to the testimony of their bishops, many feeble souls in Belgium to-day are tempted even to be unfaithful to their God, what feelings must they not entertain toward Germany? And it is these seven and a half millions of human beings, full of such thoughts, that you wish, without more ado, to include among the subjects of the Empire? Will you not at least recognise that it is absolutely necessary that the German Catholics should at last reflect upon their duty toward this people, so cruelly trampled underfoot, and that they at least should intervene, with all the influence that is theirs, in order that this people shall not be even further trampled upon?

Have you, then, not heard the voice of the common Father of Christendom; not heard his touching prayer "that disunion may disappear from among men," and his bitter complaint that "the present hour so cruelly oppresses him, with its unjust hatred and its terrible streams of blood?"

* * * * *

I beg you, Sir, not to address to me the

statement so often made in Germany—namely, that the whole responsibility for the lamentable happenings in Belgium rests upon "the mischievous decisions of her Government."

"Belgium," it is maintained in the German Press, "should have behaved as did Luxembourg, and left a free passage for our troops marching against France; she would have been spared all this devastation."

In the first place it must be remembered that the attitude of Belgium differed from that of Luxembourg only because Germany treated the two countries differently. Luxembourg was occupied at one stroke, without previous warning, by the German troops. If Germany had demanded that Luxembourg should consent to the violation of her neutrality, there is not the slightest doubt that the Luxembourg Government would have met this demand by the same negative reply as was received from Belgium. You cannot, Sir, regard the Grand Duchess as unfaithful to her oath and her sworn fealty.

Moreover, where Belgium is concerned

we must distinguish between an *invasion* (*Einmarsch*) of German troops for the purpose of occupying and conquering the country and their simple *passage* (*Durchmarsch*) toward France. In principle, either one or the other ought to be opposed. But it was strategically impossible for Belgium to oppose a simple passage, and, as a matter of fact, despite its protest, offered as a matter of principle, the Belgian Government did not oppose the passage pure and simple.

France, as we know, forms the southern frontier of Belgium, and is divided from Germany by the Belgian province of Luxembourg and the Grand Duchy. At the beginning of the war this province was totally undefended by Belgian troops. On the whole of the Belgian-German frontier, a distance of ninety-three miles, from Herbesthal to Arlon, there was not—apart from the usual guard-houses of the *gendarmerie*—a single Belgian soldier. So that Germany could very easily, and without shedding a drop of blood, have effected her *passage* into France.

But this was not what happened. On August 4 the German troops *invaded* Belgium, and they assuredly did not invade the country in the direction of the French frontier. They entered Belgium at the other extremity of the country, at Visé, quite close to the Dutch frontier, that is, the northern frontier. It was not until August 12, eight days later, that the Arlon district, the southern portion of the Province of Luxembourg, and the key of the French frontier, was occupied. It was not the *passage* but the *invasion* of the German troops which Belgium opposed, because this invasion must necessarily have led, and in the sequel did lead, to the complete conquest of the country.

However, the most urgent strategic necessity, whether of a passage through the country or of an invasion, could not have justified the character of the hostilities which took place in Belgium. "The violence of the attack," in the words of Benedict XV, "surpassed all measure." There is no doubt on that point; and "those who crossed the frontier of their own terri-

tory devastated the invaded regions more than was required by the necessities of military occupation."

The *a priori* denials of the German "intellectuals," formerly so proud of their professed freedom from prejudice, have, in this connection, entirely failed in their object, for we are concerned here with *perfectly definite facts*, witnessed by millions of persons, established by a special Commission of Inquiry composed of jurists, and denounced, in an irrefutable fashion, by overwhelming proofs, to the entire civilised world. Neither are we dealing with habitual disorders, such as occur in every war, and are almost inevitable, but, to quote the expressions employed by Mgr. Heylen in his *mandamus*, with calamities unexampled in the history of Belgium, although that history has in the past centuries been sufficiently disturbed. Yes, and one might add: unexampled in the history of humanity. In the past, it is true, whole countries have been devastated, and during the Thirty Years' War the sinister Christian de Halberstadt recruited

in his army a corps of incendiaries (*brand-meister*). But the incendiary bands of the *condottieri* of the seventeenth century had not at their disposal the technical methods which modern times have placed in the hands of the destroyers.

* * * * *

It will hardly serve the cause of national reconciliation so ardently desired by Benedict XV to deprive the German people, by means of the Press, of an exact knowledge of the real situation; or, on the other hand, to call their attention complacently, and even to satiety, in illustrated periodicals and periodicals without illustrations, to trumpery anecdotes of heroes of the *land-sturm* who offer slices of bread to little Belgian mendicants. Stories of this kind can only arouse resentment. You have doubtless heard, on the evenings of the Holy Week, in the twilight of our churches, the liturgical chants in which the prophet Jeremiah makes lamentation. What a striking description he gives us, in the picturesque language of the East, of the sufferings and the abasement of his people

in the days of the Babylonian captivity! Yet even in Jeremiah you will seek in vain for a picture so sadly humiliating as that of a poor little child, tortured by hunger, going to beg a morsel of bread at the hands of the foreign conqueror!

* * * * *

I refuse to consider any further the frightful atrocities which occurred in Belgium during the month of August. I will content myself with citing a few brief extracts from the statement made by Mgr. Heylen in his Lent *mandamus*. This *mandamus* does not refer to the whole of Belgium, but only to the diocese of Namur.

In the course of his letter the Bishop solemnly protests that it was by no means his wish to encourage in his diocesans any ideas of revolt against the existing authorities, nor even feelings of discouragement. He wished merely to open his suffering heart to the hearts of his children, that he might thereby afford himself and them some consolation.

He wished also to draw their attention to the temptations which would attack

them by reason of the excess of their woes, and to teach them in what fashion they should accept these trials, in order to make them work for the salvation of their souls. In touching phrases the Bishop speaks in memory of *the twenty-five priests and brothers of his diocese*, who, during the happenings of August, had lost their lives, without offence on their side, and of others, far more numerous, who were maltreated and martyred in all sorts of ways. Mgr. Heylen also gives full vent to his sorrow in respect of *the thousands on thousands* of civilians of his diocese who were cruelly massacred, without his being able to discover whether in even one single case the guilt of the persons executed was irrefutably proved.

And he adds—

"The sorrow of all those who have to deplore the death of a father, a son, a brother or a friend touches us closely. Above all, we partake of the sorrow of all those parishes so cruelly tried in which one now encounters only orphans and widows, and which are bemoaning the fate of those families which have completely

disappeared from among the living, to the last heir of their race. . . . What can we say now of the material ruins which have in so brief a space of days accumulated in so many different parts of our diocese? We have personally passed through the devastated regions, and everywhere we have shed bitter tears at the spectacle of the ruins of so many churches, schools, presbyteries and dwelling-houses, which were destroyed, in some cases, as the result of a battle, but most frequently by incendiarism.

"Shall we mention the names of localities? Dinant, Tamines, Saint-Martin, Sorinne, Spontin, Hastière, Hermeton, Onhaye, Anthée, Maurenne, Suria, Romedenne, Franchimont, Villers-en-Fagne, Frasnes, Willerzie, Bourseigne, Musson, Buranzy, Ethe, Gomery, Tintigny, Houdemont, Rossignol, Herbeumont, Maissin, Porcheresse—all these parishes are completely erased from the map of the diocese. In addition to these places, which have disappeared from the surface of the earth, there are *one hundred and fifty more* in which the

work of destruction has been more or less incomplete." [1]

In his address of January 22 Benedict XV adjured the belligerents in the most pressing fashion "to spare more especially the houses of the Lord and the servitors of His altars." Ah, well, the cases of sacrilege committed all over Belgium during the month of August were so atrocious that the pen of a Catholic shrinks from describing them.

Here, as Mgr. Heylen says—

"A thing that profoundly and quite especially afflicts our heart is the thought of the horrible acts of sacrilege of which different parts of our diocese have been the theatre. We deplore them from the bottom of our heart, because they directly strike at our Divine Master in the Most Holy Sacrament of the altar, whose cult we have made such efforts to diffuse throughout our diocese. You will recall all those

[1] We believe the text of Mgr. Heylen's letter has never reached France or England; at all events, we were unable to discover it, so that the above version is re-translated from the German.

majestic manifestations of faith in which we lately glorified the Lord in His Sacrament at the time of our local Eucharistic Congresses. For this reason you will the better comprehend all the bitterness of the outrages which our Saviour has had to endure. But assuredly we know that judgment and condemnation appertain to the Lord alone, and we beg the Eternal Judge to bestow his pardon upon the guilty."

This prelate, to whom the management of the International Eucharistic Congresses owes so much, is entirely in the right when he leaves the Lord to judge the acts of sacrilege which have been committed. But this is one reason the more why the German Catholics should refuse all responsibility for such crimes. It is the same in all that concerns the assassinations of priests; assassinations without excuse, as their Bishops and the entire Belgian people bear witness. Here we must have the matter made absolutely clear, and the question of sanction or assent must not be forgotten. This affects the most precious possession of the German people—religious peace, com-

promised by a campaign of accusations, whose falsity can be proved, against the Belgian people; it affects the honour of the German people and the moral foundations of the Empire. You will yourself, Sir, admit that Germany cannot be blest and prosperous when the German Catholics themselves refuse to look into this question and expressly decline all responsibility for the acts of sacrilege committed, and the assassinations of priests; when, even in the face of the innumerable victims of Nietzschean super-humanity and the *furor protestanticus* they emit, in chorus, this horrible cry: "May their blood be upon us and upon our children!"

* * * * *

When, at the beginning of the war, and in spite of the intellectual claustration to which we in Luxembourg were so long condemned, the news of what was happening in Belgium, at our very gates, found its way to us, and day by day still further acquired the character of absolute certainty, we asked ourselves in amazement how such atrocities were possible in the

twentieth century, and on the part of the German people, a nation so proud of its culture. Only to-day can we give the key to this enigma, which then appeared undecipherable. We must seek the solution in the frantic campaign, of which history affords us no other example, which the German Press has waged against the Belgian people. In this campaign the Catholic "religious" journals have quite peculiarly distinguished themselves. Examine, for example, the back numbers of *Leo*, "a Sunday newspaper for the German People," published by the *Bonifazius-Gesellschaft*[1] of Paderborn, which has, in Westphalia, a circulation of over 100,000. What is related here of Belgian *francs-tireurs*, stories not one of which is based on the truth, and of which not one could be proved, verges on the incredible.[2]

[1] This is no doubt connected with the *Bonifazius-verein*, associations created by German Catholics to maintain or diffuse the Catholic faith in Protestant regions of the Empire.

[2] During the past year it has happened that the present translator has had to translate scores of these legends, and the same legend has turned up

Even before the war (we are told) the Belgians were committing the most terrible

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repeatedly in different quarters, sometimes over a different signature. Most notable of all is a totally imaginary account of the destruction of a *Jesuit* convent of *silent* monks, which stood without the walls of Liége, by *Belgian* peasants, while a Zeppelin bombarded the forts; the monks being eventually rescued by *German* soldiers. Now there never was a Jesuit convent outside Liége; Jesuits take no vow of silence; and no dirigible had flown over Liége at the date mentioned. Each time the translator has met with this legend it has appeared over a different signature.

Descriptions (in soldiers' letters) of forcing the gates of Liége with great slaughter, under the fire of *francs-tireurs* and Frenchmen hidden in the houses, were very popular. Now Liége is an open town. Von Emmich entered it without firing a shot, behind a crowd of starving, fainting, terrified hostages, whom the gallant commander drove across the bridge to make sure that it was not mined.

A German captain, instructed to search for arms, stated that almost every house in Belgium had been loopholed for rifle fire—proving that Belgium had prepared for the war (and had known, one supposes, that she would be attacked !). These loopholes were most cunningly dissimulated behind decorative bosses or ironwork. The explanation is simple. In Belgium light scaffoldings—such as house-painters and window-cleaners might use—are not built up from the ground, but suspended from iron bars, which are thrust (from the loft of the house) through iron tubes, which run

crimes against the Germans. For instance, this publication, designed for the edification of the German people, announces in its issue for the 12th Sunday after Pentecost that before the war five Germans were wounded in Belgium (so there were wounded before there was fighting), pierced with blows from carving-knives, and blinded

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through the walls just over or under the eaves. The outer ends of these tubes are closed by carved or wrought caps or finials. The captain might have added that the preparations for war had been going on for several centuries, and that the rifles could only have been aimed at the roofs of the opposite houses!

What is most characteristic of all these legends is the slavish lack of originality betrayed. Eyes of wounded men are gouged out—always by *young girls*, who use *corkscrews* for the purpose! Women pour burning *paraffin* over soldiers (paraffin does not burn). Children (or wounded men) are thrown *naked* from third-storey windows. Similarly, when Herr Erzberger says, "The war which is conducted with severity is the most humane war," and that this or the other crime is preferable to the death of one German soldier, he is merely echoing, like a parrot, as almost every German general has done, a proposition of Lieber's, which he possibly repeated after some other military writer. A year's work upon such documents leaves an impression of insensate egoism, parrot-like or simian imitativeness, and complete mental servility.—B.M.

with rifle-bullets; a German butcher in Brussels was said to have been decapitated and cut into pieces; while another, a shopkeeper, was quartered alive.[1] Of course these tales of brigands are terminated by threats: Belgium shall pay dearly for such atrocities!

In its thirty-second number this "improving publication" goes to the length of an almost direct provocation to assassinate foreign princes. On page 330 we read—

"How many times has not the Catholic Church been wrongly accused of permitting tyrannicide! To-day every one is obsessed by the same question: Would it not have been better to hang to the nearest tree half-a-dozen of the authors of this war, chosen from among the Russian Grand Dukes?"

When such language is possible in a Sunday newspaper intended for the good and worthy peasants of Westphalia, what are we to expect from the spiteful publica-

[1] Both men were alive and well a few months ago.—B.M.

tions of the anti-Catholics and anti-clericals? It goes without saying that in all these tales of *francs-tireurs* priests or monks always play the leading part. The frenzy of the German Evangelicals reached such a pitch that the Ordinary of the Bishopric of Hildesheim was forced officially to declare that the Catholic workers, in the purely Protestant or the bi-confessional districts, were hardly able to attend the factories, for fear of the outrages which the Protestants were ready to commit upon them, on account of the so-called atrocities committed upon the German troops in Belgium by the priests and monks of that country. *This campaign of hatred and untruth, apparently organised by unseen leaders, has plunged the German people into a state which borders on delirium, and which will remain the eternal shame of those who have made themselves responsible for it.* The results, of course, were not slow to materialise, and even in Germany the campaign has recoiled upon the German Catholic ecclesiastics.

It will be enough for me to recall the

case of the Dean of St. Nicholas of Elbing and his priests, who were subjected to the insults of the populace; and the case of the curate of Sourbrodt in the Eiffel, who was confined for three days in a narrow little room by infuriated German soldiers and severely maltreated. At the period when the popular excitement reached its climax, the majority of the Belgian ecclesiastics taken to Germany as hostages were subjected to the utmost violence by the frantic populace, even in Catholic towns. I could furnish the most circumstantial proofs of this fact.

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Excesses of this kind, which have occurred even in Germany, deserve no more than a mention beside the monstrous atrocities of which almost the entire Belgian clergy has been the victim. In many places, indeed, the German troops began by maltreating the ecclesiastics and taking them away as hostages. The nature of the maltreatment inflicted is in many cases impossible to describe. Let us remark merely that priests have frequently been

entirely deprived of their clothing without any regard for their modesty.

This happened, among others, to Dr. Noel, Professor in the University of Louvain; the curé of St. Joseph at Louvain; the rector of the Schentwald missions, and various other priests, who, being arrested as they were escaping from the blazing city, were shut up, completely naked, in pigsties, after the animals had been driven out. (Report of the Commission of Inquiry.)

Very often, also, ecclesiastics were tortured by threats of death, ranged against a wall, and covered by rifles, until they were like to lose their reason. Then they would be left in peace for a few hours or days, only to be subjected anew to the same threats of execution, and other threats even worse.

One ecclesiastic, for example, M. Goffin, Director of the Episcopal College at Visé, was placed against a wall for execution nine times in the course of a fortnight. (Declaration made to me by this ecclesiastic in person.)

The highest ecclesiastical dignitaries were not spared. The venerable Bishop of Liége, Mgr. Rutten, an old man of nearly eighty years, was taken as hostage, led to the citadel, and there had to wait for an hour in the pouring rain, until he was confined, with his companions, in a stable or barn of some sort, where there was not even a chair on which he could rest. (Declaration of the Bishop.)

Mgr. Heylen, Bishop of Namur, was confined in a small room in the Hôtel de Ville, at first without a chair or provision for the night. Later the Hôtel de Ville and whole blocks of houses on the neighbouring Place were burned and transformed into a frightful heap of ruins. The Bishop and the priests who shared his captivity would have been burned alive, but that they dropped from a window overlooking the external courtyard of the Hôtel de Ville and so took to flight.

The worthy Bishop of Tournai, since dead, who was also nearly eighty years of age, was led as a hostage with the notables of his city along the road from Ath to

Brussels. As the aged Bishop, exhausted by this unaccustomed exertion under the burning August sun, was tottering with fatigue and nearly falling to the ground, one of the soldiers who accompanied the convoy of prisoners cruelly struck him. (Report of the Commission of Inquiry.)

The state of mind responsible for these deeds is still so widely prevalent in Germany that some, at least, of the ecclesiastics massacred in Belgium are said to have committed such actions against the German soldiers as would have cost them their life. *Pax-Information* (third year, No. 5, p. 2) even distributes privately items of news intended to confirm this point of view. These statements are in open contradiction to the testimony of the entire Belgian people, and, above all, to that of the competent Bishops, who have in every case instituted a complete and detailed inquiry. Mgr. Rutten, Bishop of Liége, informed me personally that he had sent the Governor-General of Belgium, who was at that time Marshal von der Goltz, the documents relating to the inquiry which he had insti-

tuted, and which, without exception, and in an absolutely convincing manner, established the entire innocence of the priests executed in his diocese, but that von der Goltz never vouchsafed him the least reply. Mgr. Heylen testifies of the twenty-five priests massacred in the diocese of Namur—

"They were numbered among the most virtuous of my priests, the gentlest and the most zealous for the welfare of souls." (Lent *mandamus.*)

Similarly, in this diocese of Namur, the inquiry which was instituted proved the complete innocence of all these priests. On bringing this result to the knowledge of the German authorities, the Bishop ended with the statement that if he could be provided with proof that a single priest of his diocese had behaved improperly toward the German soldiers, he would pledge himself to bestow the severest reprimand on him, and would not hesitate to give public expression of his displeasure from the vantage of the pulpit. This communication, like the others, never, as far as I know, elicited any reply.

Cardinal Mercier gives the following testimony as to the priests of his diocese—

"In my diocese alone I know that thirteen priests or monks have been put to death. One of them, the Curé of Gebrode, in all probability died the death of a martyr. I have made a pilgrimage to his tomb, and, surrounded by the flock which only yesterday he was tending with the zeal of an apostle, I implored him from the heights of Heaven to watch over his parish, the diocese, and the country. . . . I assert upon my honour, and I am ready to declare upon oath, that I have not hitherto encountered a single instance in which an ecclesiastic, whether secular or regular, has incited the civil population to take up arms against the enemy. All, on the contrary, have faithfully obeyed the episcopal instructions which they had received as far back as the first days of August, and which bade them exert their moral influence over our population, in order to keep them quiet and regardful of military regulations." [1]

[1] From Cardinal Mercier's Christmas Letter.

Cardinal Mercier's Christmas Pastoral Letter gave rise to the exchange of the following letters, a correspondence which is highly significant—

Colonel Wengersky, commander of the district of Malines, sent Cardinal Mercier the following letter. The original German text is not available, but here is the translation of the French version—

"Malines, January 20, 1915.

"*Commander of District J. R. Nos.* 262/III.

"To His Eminence the Cardinal Archbishop of Malines.

"According to a note which appeared in a newspaper, numerous priests are said to have been killed, although innocent, in the diocese of Malines.

"In order to be able to institute an inquiry, I beg your Excellency to be so good as to inform me whether priests have been killed, although innocent, and what priests have been killed.

"I much desire to learn under what circumstances these actions are supposed

to have been committed, what troops may be regarded as responsible, and on what date these events are said to have occurred.

"*District Commander,*

"COLONEL WENGERSKY."[1]

This letter reached Malines on January 24, and Mgr. Mercier at once wrote the following reply—

"HERR KREISCHEF,

"I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of the letter 268/II,[2] dated January 20, which you were good enough to send me.

"The names of the priests and monks of the diocese of Malines who to my knowledge have been put to death by the German troops are as follows: Dupierreux, of the Company of Jesus; Brothers Sebastien and Albert, of the congregation of the Josephites; Brother Candide, of the congregation

[1] The French translation appeared with the German text in the *XX^e Siècle* (a semi-official Belgian journal now published at Havre) for February 21–22, 1915.

[2] So in French text.

of the Brothers of Mercy; Father Maximin, Capuchin; Father Vincent, conventual; Carette, professor; Lombaerts, Goris, de Clerck, Dergent, Wouters, Van Bladel, curés.

"At Christmas, when I published my pastoral letter, I did not yet know with certainty what had been the fate of the curé of Hérent: since then his body has been recovered at Louvain and identified.

"Other figures mentioned in my pastoral letter should be increased to-day: thus for Aerschot I gave the figure as ninety-one victims; now the total of the inhabitants of Aerschot disinterred has increased; a few days ago the figure was 143. But the moment has not come to lay stress upon these particular facts. The relation of these facts will be for the inquiry to which you enable me to look forward.

"It will be a consolation to see a full light thrown upon the events which I have been forced to recall in my pastoral letter and others of the same kind.

"But it is essential that the results of this inquiry shall be made apparent to all with irrefutable authority.

" To this end, I have the honour to propose to you, M. le Comte, and through your kind intervention to propose to the German authorities, that the commission of inquiry shall be composed in equal proportions of German delegates and Belgian magistrates, and presided over by a representative of a neutral country. I am glad to believe that His Excellency the Minister of the United States would not refuse to accept this post or to entrust it to a delegate chosen by him.

" Accept, I beg you, Herr Kreischef, the assurances of my high esteem.

" D. J. CARD. MERCIER,
" Arch. of Malines."

The Cardinal's letter, so far as I know, remains unanswered to this day. On the other hand, the whole foreign Press in the four quarters of the world has published this exchange of letters and commented upon it with great severity.

Does it not seem to you, Sir, that the honour of Germany demands that light should be thrown upon this affair, at the risk of causing the competent authorities

to condemn the excesses committed, and at the cost of denying all responsibility for their occurrence? Is it not a duty incumbent upon all German Catholics to take this matter in hand for the honour of the Church and of the clergy, as well as for the honour of their country?

* * * * *

Do not, I beg you, Sir, attribute the freedom of language which I have employed here to Germanophobe intentions. On the very eve of hostilities I was intervening here, on this western frontier of the Germanic linguistic area, by writing and by speech, in favour of the true Germanism as against an exaggerated *franscaillerie*. On my initiation, and through my exertions, there was even erected, in my commune, a monument of considerable proportions to the memory of the battles which our fathers fought against the first French Republic. Germanophobes would not adopt my freedom of speech; they seek rather to ingratiate themselves, in order to surprise military secrets advantageous to the enemy. I address myself not to the Germanophobe

Press abroad, but to Germany, to you, the member of the Reichstag, as the qualified political representative of the German Catholics.

The German people, poisoned by the information presented by a Press devoid of a conscience, is still the prey of a sort of Nationalist delirium. The cause of the true Germanism can only suffer, while the military operations cannot benefit in the least therefrom. The aim of this long letter, in the measure of my poor abilities, is simply to aid in at length arousing the German people from the vertigo of a national hatred, which is corrupting everything, in order to lead it back to the true love for the fatherland.

Accept, Sir, the expression of my high esteem.

ÉMILE PRÜM, *Burgomaster.*
Commander of the Order of St. Sylvester and Member of the Permanent Committee of the International Eucharistic Congresses.

Clervaux, Luxembourg,
March 11, 1915.

II

THE PROCEEDINGS INSTITUTED AGAINST M. PRÜM

I

Publication and Seizure of the Pamphlet

Let us resume our commentary.

The document which we have just translated reached us by the hand of a reliable agent, but without any other indications than those which it bore within itself. But these are sufficient to enable us to form an idea of the value of the testimony here given, and of the courage required to give it.

Isolated, disarmed, at the mercy of the invader, M. Prüm raised his voice without recking of the consequences, as an impartial witness—nay, a judge. He has seen; he knows; he gives his verdict.

We shall not greatly insist on the interest of this important document. We will only remark that it is the only one of its kind, and this kind is rare. M. Prüm possesses all the qualities needful in order that his protest may travel far and be clearly heard.

An eminent Catholic, as we have said, German in language, thought and culture, a neutral in the conflict, but well situated as an observer, M. Prüm, unsolicited by any—save his own conscience—felt the need of rendering this unique homage to the Truth.

We will not repeat what he has said and what the reader has just perused. His words are plain enough. His decision is definite enough. We should only spoil his deposition. Better to say nothing; to let nothing intervene between the reader and the text. It is the classic method.

We shall not criticise. We shall say no more. We only regret that we have not more information as to the effect produced in the Catholic circles of Germany by this unexpected ultimatum. It must have been considerable. Doubtless the

immediate seizure of the pamphlet enabled the authorities to moderate this effect; but we know from other sources—as we shall presently see—that M. Prüm's letter, before appearing in pamphlet form, was published in two Luxembourg newspapers, the *Clerfer Echo* and *Fortschritt,* published respectively at Clervaux and Diekirch. It is probable—it is certain—that M. Prüm's letter was read by Herr Erzberger and the leaders of the sometime Catholic Centre. It is also certain that it moved them to anger. The German Catholic Press has doubtless treated the matter with the greatest reserve,[1] but we know that Herr Erzberger felt that M. Prüm's thrust had gone home. This we know from Herr Erzberger himself.

[1] The *Kölnische Volkszeitung* of May 13, 1915, openly insults M. Prüm. It states that "the Francophiles have found *unexpected* assistance in the person of M. Prüm," and that his open letter "is of a kind calculated to do a great deal of harm" to Herr Erzberger and the German Catholics.

II

Herr Erzberger Prosecutes M. Prüm

Our information on this subject is derived from the *Clerfer Echo*, M. Prüm's newspaper. Always sincere, always courageous, M. Prüm continues to live and to think in the open. Having confided his anxieties to us, he now tells us of his tribulations.

For the *Clerfer Echo* of April 3, 10, 15 and 30 tells us that two prosecutions were instituted against M. Prüm on account of his open letter.

But we will let M. Prüm speak for himself. This is what he tells us in the *Clerfer Echo* of April 3—

"In reply to my open letter, Herr Erzberger has lodged against me with the Public Prosecutor[1] of Luxembourg (*Generalstaatsanwaltschaft*) a complaint of insult.[2] Herr Erzberger does not, there-

[1] *Procureur-général*, Public Prosecutor or Attorney-General.—B.M.

[2] It is impossible to find legal English equivalents for terms describing plaints and indictments and actions unknown to English law. The terms can only be translated literally.—B.M.

fore, contest any of the *facts* alleged by me. That would have been impossible, for all my statements are supported by the most conclusive evidence. Neither can Herr Erzberger regard any of the *expressions* which I have employed as insulting. Nor does he complain of a *qualified insult* (*Formalbeleidigung*). Moreover, he expressly declares that I have not maligned his *person* (*dass ich seiner Person nicht zu nahe getreten sei*). On the contrary: he regards himself as insulted in his quality as Member of the Reichstag, because I maintain in my open letter that he has, although a Catholic, taken up a position which is *in opposition to the Pope.*

"But what is this? I have quoted *the very articles which Herr Erzberger has contributed to the Press,* and even *verbatim* passages cut from newspapers which my adversary himself has sent me. I have compared these declarations with the *purport* of the instructions which Pope Benedict XV, in his consistorial address of January 22, 1915, addressed to the belligerents in the face of Christendom. Herr Erzberger

cannot cast any doubt on the exactitude of the respective texts which I have quoted. If the result is a glaring contrast, as, for example, when Herr Erzberger expresses a desire to see the city of London entirely annihilated [1]—a desire which cannot by any possibility be reconciled with the instructions, prayers and urgent adjurations which the Pope has addressed to the belligerents, that they should spare the civil populations and work as little devastation as possible upon the enemy territory which they have entered—if this be so, the fault is not mine. The contrast, which Herr Erzberger finds offensive, cannot be suppressed by lodging a complaint against me with the Public Prosecutor of Luxembourg. If Herr Erzberger, the member of the Reichstag, feels it necessary to justify himself, he can turn to Rome. He knows the way thither very well, and no one will conceal the fact that his declarations have provoked violent protests in the neutral Catholic Press, which is particularly devoted

[1] See Herr Erzberger's article, "Only, no Sentimentality!" in *Der Tag*, No. 30, 1915.

to the Holy See—in Switzerland, for example, and Italy.

"One thing has occurred in connection with Herr Erzberger's complaint which has greatly astonished me, and of which I feel I must speak. More than ten days ago, before any one could have known of the steps then contemplated by Herr Erzberger, these measures were announced in Luxembourg as being imminent. I draw the conclusion that Herr Erzberger is constantly in touch with Luxembourg, having correspondents here, if not agents, to whom he has assigned the task of exerting a moral influence over neutral countries. This proves admirably how fully I was justified in freely and publicly opposing their efforts."

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III

The Luxembourg Government to the aid of Herr Erzberger

We spoke first of Herr Erzberger's plaint, because it is—from the Catholic and psychological point of view—the most im-

portant. The documents in our possession do not enable us to state the precise date on which it was lodged. But it must have been about the end of March, perhaps on April 1. In any case, before this date another judicial action—of which, again, we do not know the precise date—was instituted against M. Prüm, this time by the Luxembourg Government.

This action—of which we find a detailed report in the *Clerfer Echo* of April 10—has so far expressed itself in two ways: (1) at the request of the Public Prosecutor of Luxembourg, M. Prüm's pamphlet, published at Diekirch by M. Cariers, at the *Fortschritt* printing offices, was judicially seized; (2) a rather fantastic public action was instituted against M. Prüm. We cannot better expound the facts than by translating an article relating to these two actions which appeared in the *Clerfer Echo* of April 10 over the signature of M. Cariers. Here is the article—

"It is already some weeks since we informed our readers that the seizure of the Prüm-Erzberger pamphlet, which we

had intended to publish, had been ordered by the Public Prosecutor of Luxembourg.

" In due season we vigorously protested against this measure, for there was and is nothing to explain it.

" The police were not even told which article of the law was relied upon to give this judicial seizure a legal basis ; it was only later that we were informed that it had taken place in virtue of Article 123 of the Penal Code.

" Here is this Article 123—

" Whosoever, by means of hostile actions, not approved by the Government, shall have exposed the State to hostilities on the part of a foreign Power, will be punished by five to ten years' detention, and if hostilities result therefrom, by ten to fifteen years' detention." [1]

" Although the commentators have very

[1] We have collated the official text of the Luxembourg Code, which is drafted in French, by means of the *Code pénal luxembourgeois*, published and annotated by Ruppert, Councillor, Secretary General to the Government, Secretary to the Council of State, and Clerk of the Chamber of Deputies, Luxembourg.

greatly extended the scope of this article [1] of the law, it must be remembered, in order

[1] We do not know what the jurisprudence and legal doctrine of Luxembourg have decided in this matter. M. Cariers' estimation seems to us excessive. Article 123 of the Penal Code of Luxembourg is merely the imperfect and attenuated combination of Articles 84 and 85 of the French Penal Code. These two fantastic articles are to-day regarded as obsolete, modern law no longer permitting of their application, for reasons which we could not enter into for lack of space, and which would only interest jurists.

Still, these articles, especially Article 84, have given rise to a certain amount of jurisprudence, albeit very meagre and insignificant. For example: the capture of a foreign vessel; violent attacks upon a foreign customs post; gifts made to Don Carlos by a certain Jauge; the subscription opened by *La Vraie France* in 1873 for the benefit of the Carlists; the exhibition, by the newspaper *La Revanche*, in 1887, of a written placard placed beneath the French and Russian colours, announcing the success, in Alsace-Lorraine, of all the protesting candidates for the Reichstag.

In any case, the French text and the Luxembourg text from which it is derived both contain an identical expression: *hostile actions*. What is a hostile action? Here the French doctrine, in default of jurisprudence, which has never—for good reason—had any occasion to come into play, possesses a tradition which has continued unchanged: "We must confine ourselves to saying, in the terms of the law, that hostile actions

to avoid a wholly arbitrary interpretation, that the action at issue cannot possess a

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are all *material actions* which, not approved by the Government, have exposed the State to a declaration of war" (Faustin Hélie, *Théorie du Code Pénal*, II. 436, ed. 1872). "The essential condition is that material actions must be in question. Indeed, Article 84 does not punish the offence as it might express itself by written or spoken opinion, but only the act, that is to say, a tangible, material deed" (Garraud, *Traité théorique et pratique du Droit pénal français*, III. 837). "Hostile actions must consist of a material, tangible, external deed. However comprehensive these expressions may be, one cannot include by them offences toward foreign sovereigns or outrages committed upon diplomatic agents. . . . Our provisions would not be applicable to journalists, who, without being guilty of outrages or provocations or material and hostile actions, might expose France to diplomatic complications, reprisals, or a risk of war, by imprudent or impassioned polemics" (Garçon, *Code Pénal annoté*, sub-Articles 84 and 85, Nos. 12 and 14). Such, too, is the doctrine of M. le Poitevin.

So M. Prüm's letter, not being a material act, is not within the scope of Article 123. His lofty polemics concern the Press and the Press laws. Now the Luxembourg Press Law of July 20, 1809 (art. 5), like the French law of 1881, punishes only insults offered to sovereigns or diplomatic agents.

In our opinion, then, it is impossible to find in the whole arsenal of Luxembourg law a single text which applies to the present case, on account of the

character of hostility unless this hostility exists in the mind of its author—that is, unless the latter yields to external constraint or acts without discernment."

M. Cariers then explains in detail that M. Prüm, as he has expressly declared, cherished no hostility toward the German Army, nor toward the German people. He simply profited by the glaring contrast which reveals itself between the Nietzschean philosophy, which has instigated so many regrettable actions, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, the instructions of the Pope, in order to invite the belligerent States to a policy of reconciliation. The facts which he alleges are intended only to justify his views. It is their perpetration which injures Germany, not the conclusions which he draws from

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expression "hostile action," which is extremely definite. Hence it matters little whether the breach of the law implied by the Luxembourg *parquet** is or is not *contraventional*, that is, whether it requires, or does not require, in order that it may be realised, a hostile *intention*. Time will have shown whether there are judges in Diekirch.

* The State or prosecuting magistracy.—B.M.

them. Moreover, his "open letter" is in a sense merely the development of an article published by him before the war in the *Allgemeine Rundschau*, in which he upheld "the true Germanism." Where is the hostility in this?

M. Cariers goes on to say that the rights and duties of neutrals should receive more consideration. Their rights are violated by an occupation "which we do not recognise." As for their duties, it must be remembered that later on "they will be called to account for the manner in which they have fulfilled them"; that is, as far as they are allowed to exercise them at all.

Having observed that there is nothing to be feared from Germany more than that which she has already done, M. Cariers adjures the Government "to remember that even under these difficult circumstances our national possessions must be defended with the greatest energy, lest we incur the guilt of having despised those rights which constitute our national independence."

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IV

M. Prüm's Defence and Justification

It was on April 8 that M. Prüm was summoned before the examining magistrate of Diekirch to reply : (1) to an action instituted against him by the Public Prosecutor of Luxembourg in respect of his " open letter " to Herr Erzberger, published in the columns of *Fortschritt* and the *Clerfer Echo ;* and (2) to the complaint lodged against him for the same cause by Herr Erzberger, member of the German Reichstag.

M. Prüm himself relates in five full columns of the *Clerfer Echo* for April 15 how this session passed off, what he was accused of, and what he replied.

Here, to begin with, is the substance of the Public Prosecutor's indictment—

" From an examination of the facts it appears that in order to appreciate the culpability of M. Prüm it is necessary to bring in as principal motive the fact that his assertions impute to the German Army

a host of crimes or other acts which violate the laws of humanity, although such acts have not in any way been established, after hearing both parties, in their historic elements, and although their determining causes are unknown. This uncritical utilisation of foreign documents, many times refuted in the bulk and in detail by the German Press, is of a nature to do injury to the prestige and good fame of the German Army, and, by causing mental tension, is likely to provoke a declaration of war on the part of the German Empire."

M. Prüm extracts from this indictment seven grounds of accusation. Having isolated them, he replies to them separately.

"1. *My statements are said to impute to the German Army a host of crimes or other actions which violate the laws of humanity.*

"This accusation is based on the hypothesis that I have described a great number of crimes and atrocities. This is quite incorrect. In the 'open letter' which is the subject of proceedings I have as far as possible avoided descriptions of this kind. However, a few pictures of warfare

were to have been appended as documentary evidence. These were to establish the facts mentioned in my letter in an authentic and irrefutable manner. In conformity with my official declaration I have freely abandoned the publication of this series of articles." [1] However, the Belgian atrocities are a potent, established, indisputable fact. "These facts are known to every one in Luxembourg, for there is hardly a family living in the State which has not relations, in varying numbers, in Belgium, or friends or acquaintances." And M. Prüm recalls the conclusions of the Commission of Inquiry and the letters of Cardinal Mercier and Mgr. Heylen.

"2. *I am said to have described events which have occurred in Belgium although they have not in any way been established, after the hearing of all parties, in their historic elements.*

"My reply," says M. Prüm, "is the

[1] Allusion is here made to some controversy of which we know nothing. It is very difficult to obtain the smaller newspapers from Germany or Luxembourg.

same. Look at the ruins, at the dead. You cannot alter these. The world, once for all, has witnessed these things. And I have not abused the situation. Do not believe it. I have made use of Mgr. Heylen's letter, but why?

"The pastoral letter of the Bishop of Namur was read in all the pulpits of the diocese. The German authorities contented themselves with forbidding a German translation intended for the German-speaking population of the diocese, on the pretext that it was not accurate. Nevertheless the original text, as the German authorities knew, was publicly read. This is why I considered myself justified in quoting this letter in my open letter to Herr Erzberger, and in regarding it as an impartial description of the events."

M. Prüm once again cites extracts from this letter, and concludes: "The accusation made by Mgr. Heylen in such affecting terms, in the most official manner, and in sanctuary, is based upon definite facts, which the German authorities could neither contradict nor disprove. If this evidence

cannot be ranked as 'evidence based on the hearing of all parties' this is merely because no one on the German side has been able to oppose it; because, up to now, the German authorities have refused to take part in an impartial inquiry; because they have done nothing to carry out the proposals made by Cardinal Mercier in his letter of January 24, 1915. As for learning what is thought in the civilised world, beyond the frontiers of the territory in German occupation, of Mgr. Heylen's complaint, I shall content myself with citing one single witness, the most highly placed and venerable of all possible witnesses."

M. Prüm then reproduces the letter addressed to Mgr. Heylen on February 4, 1915, by the Pope. This letter the French Press has published. In it Benedict XV does not for a moment question the fact that the diocese of Namur has been hideously ravaged. It is a letter of consolation and encouragement; he prays for peace and blesses the victims.

"After such confirmation," says M. Prüm, "what Catholic can be permitted to refuse

to regard Mgr. Heylen's letter as an authentic document of the highest importance? And who dares to complain that I have utilised documents of no value?"

"3. *It is said that the determining causes of these events have not been established.*"

Again, the same reply. "However, I have avoided entering into any discussion of particular actions. I have simply referred all the excesses committed in Belgium to *one single cause*, a cause which is undeniable, and is diffused throughout all the newspapers of all Germany: it is the hideous and systematic Press campaign which has been waged against the Belgian people since the commencement of hostilities." M. Prüm refers once more to his pamphlet. No doubt, he adds, there are other causes besides this single cause.

"It is known, and may be proved, by the public registers of the communes affected, as well as by innumerable witnesses, that at Tamines, for example, 600 persons, and at Dinant more than 800, including women and children, even of two years of age, were executed—that is, they were assembled in

a public place and killed by machine-gun fire. Whether any inquiry, whether any military commission of any kind preceded these wholesale executions, we do not know, and in spite of the pressing and vehement objurgations of the international Press, it has never been possible to obtain the publication of the smallest documentary evidence of military trials in respect of these executions." [1]

" 4. *I am supposed to have made uncritical use of documents of foreign origin.*

" This expression, which includes by the term ' foreign ' all that is not German, is certainly employed by an official of the Luxembourg courts only *as a quotation* (*referierend*),[2] for to us, the people of Luxembourg, the Germans also are foreigners at the present moment, and foreigners, moreover, who have broken their sworn

[1] See *Le Crime de Guillaume*, II., by P. van Honette.

[2] M. Prüm seems to hint that the German authorities dictated the terms of his report to the Public Prosecutor of Luxembourg. *Refieren* is a juridical term used to denote the act of *reporting* or *summing up* the statements of others, or the plea of one of two contending parties.

faith, their oath, their treaties, and the public law of nations." (See the Chancellor's speech of August 4, 1914.)

"As for Belgium—all Belgian official documents seem to me of *my nationality* and all German documents *foreign*. So if I am censured for making use of official documents which are known to the whole world, which were published by the Commission of Inquiry composed of Belgian jurists, this censure is impertinent. It is enough to read my letter to realise that I did not make use of these documents, for the good reason that I did not wish to enter into any questions of the kind to which these documents refer."

"5. *The German Press is said to have refuted, in bulk and in detail, the documents of the Belgian Commission of Inquiry.*

"I have no incentive to take sides in this dispute of the German Press. In any case, it is certain that not one of the facts which I have related according to the public letters of the two Bishops has been either refuted or denied."

"6. *My letter is of a nature to injure the*

prestige and the good fame of the German Army.

" The excesses of a few, however terrible they may be, cannot smirch the honour of any entire army or corps, unless it is the case that they are not publicly condemned or expressly disavowed. The prestige of the German Army will be injured by vain attempts to enforce silence in respect of excesses which have indubitably been committed, or to deny them. My efforts have quite another purpose.

" Cardinal Mercier has officially proposed the institution of an impartial inquiry. The human population of the four quarters of the globe knows that this proposal was made, and for three and a half months has been waiting for the reply. I have addressed myself to the political representatives of the German Catholics in this neighbourhood, hoping to convince them of the necessity of accepting Cardinal Mercier's proposal.

" Those alone need fear such an inquiry who are responsible for the excesses to be investigated. These men, whose hands are

stained with the blood of so many innocent and peaceable persons, are not so interesting that we need stand on so much ceremony with them. On the other hand, such an inquiry, whatever its result, would greatly honour the German Army and the German people."

"7. *I am said to have exposed Luxembourg to the danger of hostilities, by exciting the minds of my readers.*

"This possibility, I consider, must be absolutely rejected. I have too much confidence in the spirit of justice prevailing in the ruling circles of Germany to believe in the possibility of a German declaration of war upon Luxembourg on account of a newspaper article, which to my thinking is highly sympathetic to Germany, and irrefutable both in purport and in substance. The fears of the Public Prosecutor seem to me unfounded, and the fact that the Luxembourg authorities regard the German authorities as capable of assuming such an attitude in respect of little Luxembourg, an attitude as devoid of the spirit of justice as it is of the spirit of chivalry, should

rather be regarded as a cruel insult to Germany."

Such is the system of defence adopted by M. Prüm. In closing, he turns to the judges of his own country; he begs them to be equitable and impartial. "If I am condemned," he declares, "I shall be proud to have suffered whatever penalty may be mine in the cause of truth, justice, and humanity, and I shall also feel proud that I have defended the existence of our country, which is an independent State."

* * * * *

V

Herr Erzberger replies: M. Prüm refutes him

The *Clerfer Echo* of April 30 informs us that Herr Erzberger attempted to reply to M. Prüm. When? How? We are not told. Faithful to his dialectic method, M. Prüm analyses the different heads of the argument opposed to him, and replies to each in turn. This is what he has to say—

1. *To maintain that Herr Erzberger is placing himself in opposition to the Pope is an insult which is yet further accentuated by the fact that the Pope has received Herr Erzberger in a friendly manner and on several occasions.*

"It was a great mistake on Herr Erzberger's part to refer to these audiences.[1] They were private facts of no external significance, which merit no attention in the face of the Pontiff's public declarations. Moreover, now, if ever, is the time to apply the proverb 'One receives absolution as one confesses.' In the course of his audiences the Pope replies only to questions which are put to him. It is impossible that Herr Erzberger could have explained to the Holy Father his theories concerning the annexation of neutral States, or the pitiless

[1] In the *Echo de Paris* of May 10, 1915, we read: "*Rome, May* 9.—I learn that the Pope has refused to receive the German Catholic deputy Erzberger, who came here to intrigue in favour of Germany. To the ecclesiastical world of Italy this refusal is highly significant, and will produce a very good effect in France. In Luxembourg and Belgium, too, the impression produced will be excellent."

manner in which war should be made . . . and that the Pope should have approved of them. I, too, have been received on many occasions, and in the most paternal fashion, by Leo XIII and Pius IX. But I have never from this drawn the conclusion that the Holy See confirmed my personal opinions."

2. *The opinion of the Belgian Minister to the Holy See by no means diminishes the value of these audiences, especially as M. Prüm does not publish the Pope's reply to this minister.*

M. Prüm confesses that he does not understand this argument. He is well acquainted with M. van den Heuvel, whom he went to see at Gand shortly before the war; he admires his juridico-ecclesiastical works; he also knows that the Press of the Centre has violently taken him to task for his pamphlet on "the violation of Belgian neutrality." In his relations with Herr Erzberger, M. Prüm has never spoken of M. van den Heuvel, has not quoted a single word of his. Why, then, this mention of him, and what is so mysterious about the Pope's reply?

It was officially published by the *Osservatore romano,* on March 17, and M. Prüm reproduces it in its entirety. In this reply the Pope declares in correct phrases that he seizes the occasion which is offered him of renewing "the sentiments which he has expressed, whether to the Cardinal Archbishop of Malines or in his consistorial address." M. van den Heuvel having spoken of the violation of Belgian neutrality, the Pope replies by insisting on the rôle of King Albert and the benevolent nature of his feelings toward him. One could not be more explicit. The argument, if there is any, is thus entirely ineffectual.

3. *The assertion that my articles have caused violent indignation among the Catholics of neutral countries is not true. M. Prüm cites no proof of this. On the contrary, in Italy and Spain the Catholics share my point of view.*

M. Prüm replies that he would have to make so many citations that he would rather dispense with them. As for the German Catholics, it is very possible that all share Herr Erzberger's point of view, so

imbued are they with national particularism. Here, for example, is *Der Tag*, a Berlin newspaper, which is honoured by contributions from the most prominent Catholics of the Centre—Erzberger, Bachem and Martin Spahn. Well, what do we find in *Der Tag?*

In its issue for April 7 (No. 80), *Der Tag* published an article by Moritz Reinhold Stern, in which we read: "I salute thee, Germany, saviour of the world!" In this same number Arthur Brausewetter speaks of "a saviour, who is German, for in these days, when the world can only be healed by the German character, it can find strength and support only in a German Saviour. . . . *In Christ all is German to the core.*"[1] Herr Brausewetter declares that to-day he understands the Holy Ghost. It is that which calls all Germans to unite, without distinction of creed or party, in order to save the great German cause. M. Prüm regards this as a paganisation of Christianity, and compares Herr Brausewetter's article with another assertion which

[1] *Urdeutsch.*

appeared in *Der Tag* of April 1, 1915 : " The ancient faith of our Pagan ancestors is living again in us." The religious revival excited by the war in Germany " is a return to Teutonic paganism." Last Easter a *Catholic newspaper* went so far as to write : " Christ is risen from the dead ! Rejoice, for *Jesus, thy German Saviour,* is re-arisen ! "

That Italian or Spanish Catholics should share this point of view is absolutely impossible, says M. Prüm. For that matter, we know what was the attitude of the *Unione popolare,* the organisation of the Italian Catholics. At its general assembly two resolutions were recently adopted. The first declared that when peace is concluded the duty of Catholics will be to ensure that right and justice will be respected. The second insisted that the independence of Belgium must be respected.

4. *The invitation—couched in offensive terms—which M. Prüm addresses to the German Catholics, to the effect that they shall intervene for the honour of the Church and her clergy, is an insult. I myself have done*

what a Catholic should do. The Court will decide between us.

"Germany," replies M. Prüm, "being divorced from the civilised world, no longer understands anything of what is happening, to such an extent is she retired within herself. She has lost the sense of reality. I exercised my rights as a Catholic by inviting the German Catholics to respond to Cardinal Mercier's invitation, which asks for an official and impartial inquiry. No one will prevent me from exercising these rights."

5. *M. Prüm has no mandate to issue instructions. We have our Bishops and the Pope.*

"This," declares M. Prüm, "is something new, which pleases me. For years I have heard Herr Erzberger and his friends of the Centre demanding, at the tops of their voices, the 'declericalisation' of Catholic Germany, and expressly refusing to obey the directions of their Bishops.[1] To-day they are hiding behind the Bishops. But the German Bishops, in all probability, will refuse any pronouncement on a matter of

[1] See Appendix.

external policy, such as the annexation of Belgium and Luxembourg. None the less, it seems to me that this does concern me." And M. Prüm closes by addressing a few stinging remarks to Herr Erzberger, the "professional politician." Herr Erzberger will not prevail against equity, justice, and humanity.

* * * * *

VI

Conclusion

And that is how matters stand. At the moment of writing we have received no further news of the case. We do not know what is or will be the lot of M. Prüm.

In any event, whatever the issue of his trial, it must be admitted that in all Luxembourg, perhaps in all Christendom, the boldest voice which has been raised to protest against the abuse of force, and to arraign it, has been that of the Catholic Opposition of Luxembourg incarnate in M. Prüm. So true is it that religious convictions, when they are righteous and pro-

found, constitute the best guarantee of the truth, and the surest means of attaining it !

Reduced by the cleverness and cunning of M. Eyschen, the Waldeck-Rousseau of Luxembourg, to the ungrateful part of Leader of the Opposition, M. Prüm has, in this capacity, during peace and war alike, displayed the rarest of qualities. While his rival accommodated the invader, M. Prüm was unwilling to abdicate. He made his protest, which has nothing platonic about it, nothing qualified, nothing expedient.

Whatever opinion he may hold regarding the war, whatever his sympathies may be, no Catholic can without emotion read these pages, full as they are of a lofty religious inspiration, dictated to a man of heart by preoccupations as far as possible removed from all spirit of party.

He will also admire the courage of this Catholic writer. He will thank him for having given to the world the spectacle of a liberty which nothing inhibits, neither the foreign occupation nor the omnipotence of the occupier.

* * * * *

III

APPENDIX

THE EVOLUTION OF THE GERMAN CATHOLIC CENTRE

I

The Quintessence of Germanism

Thoroughly to comprehend M. Prüm's highly significant pamphlet,[1] to grasp its full meaning, and to estimate its import, it is necessary to be in possession of certain facts relating to the German mentality, and also to the activity exerted in the heart of the Germanism thus defined by the German Catholic Centre. In other words, to appreciate M. Prüm's manifesto in the light of his motives, it is absolutely necessary that we should refer it to its twofold environment,

[1] See *Le Correspondant* for April 25, 1915, and *Le Croix* for April 21 and 23.

Catholic and German, and inquire into the relations which govern the two factors of Catholicism and Germanism, and their mutual actions and reactions. What is the tendency of Germanism, and what, on the other hand, is the evolution of Catholicism in Germany, or rather of the German Catholics, from the political, social and *cultural* point of view, in its relation to this Germanism? This is what we must inquire into and establish as objectively as possible, if we wish to form a lucid conception and serve the cause of truth.

The illuminating chapter on "Germanic Culture and Catholicism" in M. Georges Goyau's *La Guerre Allemande et la Catholicisme*[1] will considerably assist us in the first part of our task. We should seek in vain for a more certain and better-informed guide than this historian of Catholicism in Germany, whose work is at once so diligent, honest, eloquent, and concise. Few writers or thinkers are as familiar as M. Goyau with the penetralia of Germanic thought and will in the century in which we are living.

[1] Published under the direction of Mgr. Baudrillart.

The best thing we can do, therefore, is to give a summary of his conclusions.

M. Goyau's first statement refers to Germanic *culture*. It is impossible to blink one's eyes to the fact that the *evangelical* Empire [1] of Germany has since 1871 thrown itself into two great wars, both undertaken in the name of this *Kultur*: the first was declared against Catholicism, and was the *Kulturkampf*, the struggle for *Kultur*; the second, declared against Europe, is the war of to-day.

In the name and for the glory of *Kultur* "Prussian Royalty deposed, imprisoned, and exiled archbishops and bishops; in a certain number of Catholic parishes it prohibited the administration of the sacraments; it condemned to prison those heroic curés who persisted in reconciling the dying with their God." The effects of this persecution have not all been effaced, far from it! and the Imperial code retains in its arsenals the most prohibitive and

[1] It was in 1881 that the question of the essentially evangelical (that is, Lutheran) character of the German Empire was first raised by a German Catholic, Abt Majunke, in his famous pamphlet, *Das evangelische Kaisertum*.

arbitrary articles which could be imagined for the purpose of hampering the Catholic ministry. The second war to be waged in the name of this same *Kultur* was commenced by Germany in 1914, and it was at first waged most desperately against "Catholic" Belgium; it was in "Catholic" Belgium that it raged more furiously, perhaps, than in the north of France. "The second *Kulturkampf* has laid low upon the soil of Wallonia, Flanders, and Lorraine a certain number of martyrs who were suspect because they were priests, and were shot because they were suspect."

What is the quintessence of this *Kultur* whose manifestations are so homogeneous? "I open the books of the theologians, historians, and political economists whom Prussia, in the course of the nineteenth century, scattered all over Germany . . . and I find on every page a systematic equation between Protestantism and Germanism."[1] It is impossible, says M. Goyau, to get away from this intellectual

[1] The appeal of the Protestant theologians of Germany to the evangelical Christians outside Germany (August 1914) maintains that the war is

phenomenon. It is a fact which has to be reckoned with, and which history has recorded.

There is a current theory in Germany that "Germany, being Protestant, must master the Latin races." Let Balmès and Donoso Cortès hold their peace, but let the Treitschkes and the Sybels address the world, in the name of Germany the omnipotent, in order to celebrate the identity of the German spirit with Protestantism, in order to discover in Protestantism the sign and criterion of Germanism, and, therefore, of superiority. Just as the true Protestantism could not exist save in Germany, in the eyes of these apologists of Prussia, Germany is not German unless "reformed."

These assertions, no less insulting to the Protestants without the Empire than to the Catholics within it, are to be found, implied or expressed, in all the more noisy manifestations of Prussianism. It was Bunsen, a diplomatist of the King of

being waged by the Allies against Germanism and Protestantism simultaneously, the two "isms" being homogeneous.

Prussia, who, by dint of terrible threats against the "Antichrist," founded the first evangelical chapel in Rome, close to the Vatican; and it was Wilhelm II who in 1898 led to Jerusalem that famous Lutheran crusade which was intended to glorify "the pure Gospel" in the very places of its birth.

The Kaiser said, in plain German: "It is the turn of Luther to represent Christianity in Palestine. He alone can make Islam respect it." It was the same in Madrid, where the evangelical propaganda of the Fliedners and the Rupperts was directed against the Latin culture of Spain no less than against the traditional Catholicism. In Austria similar phenomena have been observed. It was in the name of Germanism that the cry of *Los von Rom* was raised. "The Emperor Wilhelm II, the final instigator of this hunt for souls, was enabled, at the end of 1903, to hear the joyful news that more than 20,000 Austrian minds had resolved to perform this supreme act of Germanism: to emigrate from the Roman Church to the Evangelical Church." In the eyes of all "good Germans"

Catholicism is a "political heresy," to be expelled from Central Europe.

Such is the "confessional hue" of Germanic *Kultur*. But it is only a shade, and a superficial one. The love of religion occupies only the second place amid the preoccupations of the Pan-Germanists, who are less *believers* than *sectarians*. Sceptics in religion, the Pan-Germanists regard Protestantism as a political instrument, and for them "the problem is to make a confession of Germanic origin prevail over the Catholicism of the Latin races."

If we look deep into their minds, we easily perceive therein an antichristianism which may be conscious or unconscious, but which is always palpable and always active. Indeed, the very principles of Germanism—for which the supreme good is "the universal advent of the Germanic ideal"—are incompatible with Christianity, which knows no moral law but that of good and evil. The Germanists and Pan-Germanists know better than this.

M. Goyau here summarises, for his own ends, the unassailable theory advanced by

M. Boutroux,[1] who, analysing the metaphysical procedures of Germanism, which were brought almost to their final point by Hegel, sees in them a negation of all morality in favour of the progress and ascent of Germanism. The Good is Germanism; Germanism is Progress. To work for Germanism is to accomplish the virtuous action *par excellence*. To rebel against its hegemony is to do evil. For Germanism in process of growth is nothing else than the progressive revelation of the Divine, and its stages mark the highway of God. Hence, all is permitted, all, absolutely all, against the enemies of the German name, who are the enemies of God. Divinity is justified of itself, and there is nothing optional where the Supreme Cause is acting and evolving.

In such a system the intelligence makes room for the will, which very soon disappears in its turn, making way for instinct and appetite. To expand in her might, to complete her consciousness at all costs,

[1] See the analysis given by *Le Croix* for October 29, 1914, of M. Boutroux's important article on *L'Allemagne et la Guerre*, first published in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, and then in book form.

such is the sole duty of Germany, blessed by the "old German God," the sympathetic spectator of the havoc which magnifies Him and incarnates Him, since it makes His place in the sun the greater. It is He. He is It. Away with the image of the Christian God, the personal, sovereign Judge, the sovereign dispenser of rewards and punishments, based upon merit and demerit! Nothing is left but an anonymous and elementary force, whose presence and control are betrayed by success, no matter by what means obtained. It would be impossible to get further away from the Gospel. The Chosen Race has only to carry out its own precepts. It is its own doctrine. The strongest is also the most just.

Having attained this point of development, Germanic thought, falling back more and more upon its original data, abandons all dealings with Holy Writ. Even the most mysterious and terrible pages of the Old Testament cease to interest it. It abandons the practice of tormenting Hebrew texts in order to wring blood and violence from them, and returns to its indigenous Paganism, to the veritable "old German

gods," to Thor and Wotan, those most authentic incarnations of the brutal dream of the Germanic race. It was in their name, indeed, that Germanism first began to fill the world with terror. They were the earliest historical manifestation of Germanism, and they will continue to inspire its great movements. "Certain Pan-Germanists have learned once more to prostrate themselves before the myths of ancient Germany. . . . They are organising a nationalist propaganda in favour of the old Germanic cults, and in honour of these cults they are founding reviews, newspapers, and pedagogical journals; they make an emphatic display of reviving the celebration of the solstice on the summits of the Tyrolean Alps; they urge the German people to replant the old sacred trees, long ago felled by St. Boniface. For these adventurous harbingers of Germanism the very Christian era must be abrogated, and the point of departure of their calendar is no longer the birth of the Redeemer, but the Battle of Norcia, fought in the year 113 B.C., between the Teutons and the Romans."

* * * * *

II

From Catholicism to Pan-Germanism

Such is the *cultural* environment in which the German Catholic Centre has been forced to evolve and to win itself a place. No environment could be more refractory to Catholicism, and it is not astonishing that in the second year of its constitution the Catholic Centre, with the Catholic Church itself, was cruelly persecuted by the Protestant majority of the German people. What is so surprising—and, for Catholicism, so scandalous—is that the Centre is to-day sharing in the intoxications and ferocities of *Kultur*.

How is it that a great and noble party has fallen so low as to celebrate perjury as an exploit and assassination as a military necessity; as to be silent when it should speak and to go on speaking when silence is its only refuge?

How is it that the Catholic Centre, once persecuted by *Kultur*, has now become its most servile ally in the new war of *Kultur*, the new *Kulturkampf*, so similar, save in

extent and the plane of development, to that which it suffered and in which it was victorious?

Ah, how far away are those heroic days when Mallinckrodt, the Reichenspergers, Savigny and Windthorst defended the liberties of the Christian people against the violence of Bismarck! And their successors are equipping the pseudo-Bismarckian corsairs of to-day!

It seems that the point when this evolution began to turn downward to decadence must be placed about 1900. Until that date the type of the "man of the Centre," was the venerable Windthorst, the protector of all the "particularisms" of Germany, the apologist of all respectable liberties, the armed champion of the most just against the most powerful. Between 1871 and 1878 these admirable followers of Windthorst were seen to sustain the most formidable struggle against the most formidable of adversaries, and to win the day.

As almost always, success led to corruption. A new type of the "man of the Centre" appeared, and was soon won over

to *Kultur* by political compromises. The Windthorst type, the Guelf provincial, the man of the opposition, was followed by men like Lieber,[1] the President of the Parliamentary Commission on the Civil Code. The elaboration of a new Civil Code for the whole Empire [2] (1900) was a radical work of unification, pre-eminently antipathetic to the spirit of the heroic Centre, which was particularist and militant. It was also a work of Germanisation, a Pan-Germanist measure, as was very soon to be seen. There is a curious little pamphlet in existence which deals with the foundation of the Kingdom of Prussia, and which is prefaced by Lieber. Its date is 1901, and its preface is quite symbolical. The new "man of the Centre," Lieber, took the side

[1] Lieber, it will be remembered, was the first to state that war was humane in proportion as it was cruel and violent.—B.M.

[2] This Code, completed in 1896, came into force in 1900. Before that date different systems of law prevailed in different States, and even in different provinces. For example, in Alsace-Lorraine the Rhine provinces were subject to the French Civil Code. It is only fifteen years since the inhabitants of the left bank of the Rhine ceased to be subject to French law.

of the Hohenzollerns, unifiers, Germanisers, and Protestants. He even attempted to subject the past of Catholicism to the destinies of Brandenburg, recalling the fact that in 1701 two Jesuits had foretold the erection of Prussia into a kingdom.[1]

It was henceforth to be the rôle of the Centre to place its Catholicism at the service of Germanisation and Pan-Germanism. Baron von Hertling, the leader of the Bavarian Centre, instituted the famous anti-French University in Strasbourg. Herr Martin Spahn demanded the absorption of the Poles by Germany; that is to say, their conversion to Protestantism.

What else happened? What, rather, did not happen? For ten years we saw the German "Centre," the "sometime Catholic Centre," to use an expression of M. Prüm's, divided into two camps, with insults on their lips and hatred in their hearts. On the one hand were austere and pettifogging Catholics, by no means anxious to proceed

[1] As a rule one prefers to remember that the Papacy solemnly protested against this measure. But a German Catholic wishes to hear nothing of pontifical decisions.

from words to deeds, professing an Ultramontane fidelity, who were presently to look to Berlin for leadership, while reproaching the "Cologne management" for betraying Catholicism and the Church. For five years past scandalous expulsions and lamentable defections have been afflicting this party, formerly so compact. Berlin says to Cologne: "You are no longer Christians." Cologne replies to Berlin: "You are destroying our unity." And the Centre rends itself, and finds no support but the Evangelical State which wishes to annihilate it.

We shall take no part in these disputes, contenting ourselves with explaining matters when the need arises. Both sides have lost their original traditions. On the one hand, at Cologne, are the official Catholics; on the other hand, in Berlin, are the aggressive Catholics. This state of affairs has prevailed for too long. On running through the list of the matters put to the vote since 1855 by the annual German Catholic Congresses, we find, moreover, that these fraternal enemies are less and less concerned with Catholicism. About 1855, for ex-

ample, an energetic campaign was undertaken to endow Germany with a Catholic University. She is still waiting for it, but no one asks for it any longer, neither the "pure" Catholics of Berlin nor the "tainted"[1] Catholics of Cologne. The victorious Centre, the Governmental party, absorbed by miserable squabbles and steeped in materialism, prefers the immediate benefits of power to the future of Catholic civilisation. It abandons its young men to the German Universities, which are peopled by professors who are almost entirely Protestant, where *Kultur* makes its adepts while Catholicism loses its vigour. Neither the "interconfessionals" of Cologne nor the "whole-hoggers" of Berlin have anything more to say of this University, which was with justice represented as indispensable sixty years ago, but whose supporters, at Congress after Congress, have held their peace or dispersed, as questions of power, prestige, theoretical economy and opportunism have gradually gained a

[1] Cardinal Kopp, Archbishop of Berlin, employed this memorable phrase in speaking of the pseudo-Catholics of the West. See his letter, p. 151, note.

more and more considerable place in the soul of the Centre as in its debates.

The interlocutor selected by M. Prüm is a perfect example of the new type of the "man of the Centre." Abbé Wetterlé, who knows him too well,[1] has given a masterly description of "this corpulent fellow, thick-set, broad-shouldered, chubby of face," a glutton for work, who, to draw the attention of the Government to his youthful ambitions, began by noisily—and successfully—fighting the Chancellor. It was he, indeed, who indirectly caused the dissolution of the Reichstag in 1906, which resulted in the return of a diminished Centre, exposed to the snares and ambushes of von Bülow (1907). Since then he has made his way, and the Kaiser did not hesitate to send this inconvenient person, who was roundly accused of venality in the lobbies of the Reichstag, to Rome.[2]

[1] See *France de demain* for February 18, 1915.

[2] In his relations with Belgium, which are not of recent date, Erzberger, the "Catholic" deputy, assumed a particularly cynical attitude.

"He, who was to introduce the War Budget in the Reichstag, made the following statements, published in the *Journal de Bruxelles* for August 26, 1913, to a Belgian, some months before the war.

We will not say: such is the Centre to-day. We will simply say: such is the

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"Herr Erzberger gives us his word of honour, making his veracity as a Catholic a case of conscience, that even in the most secret communications . . . there has never been any question of invading Belgium, nor of menacing in any manner the security of her territory. . . . Neither the German Government nor the military authorities have in any degree . . . allowed any infringement whatever of the duties imposed upon Germany by treaty to enter into their plans. . . . Belgium can always count on the faithful sympathies of the German Catholics; she can always count on the party of the Centre in the Reichstag, which strives to ensure that international engagements shall be respected.

"The war having proved to the entire world" (adds the *XX^e Siècle* of February 13, 1915) "that the invasion of Belgium had been prepared for many years in its smallest details, we now know what Herr Erzberger's word of honour is worth.

"With the same audacity of untruthfulness (and we shall see from this what Herr Erzberger is worth as a Catholic) he declared to the Berlin correspondent of the *Matin*, on the morrow of the Encyclical *Pascendi* (December 29, 1907) that there were no modernists in Germany, and that among all the known theologians there was not a single one who could be counted among the modernists as the Encyclical understands them.

"Now the most notorious apostacies and the revolts and scandals of all kinds which followed the Encyclical *Pascendi*, and which so deeply grieved Pius X to the day of his death, have proved that the

majority—or all but the majority—of the present Centre. But to understand the change from Catholic greatness to Pan-Germanist decadence, it is necessary to examine this development in detail; so far we have merely sketched its main outlines.

In order to remain closely in touch with M. Prüm we shall seek inspiration, in the following pages, from such documents, published by the henchmen of the *Berliner Richtung* (the Berlin party "machine"), as relate to the evolution of the Centre. There is no doubt that M. Prüm's German sympathies, before the war, were with the politicians of Berlin rather than with those of Cologne.

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III

The Birth, Struggles, Victory and Development of the Centre

The Catholic Centre was born in 1870 of the *Katholische Fraktion*, which in 1852

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intellectual Catholicism of Germany is rotten to the marrow."—B. Gaudeau, *Le danger pour l'Eglise est en Allemagne*, in *La Foi Catholique*, April–May 1915.

was founded in the Prussian Parliament, and which survived until 1863. Its real aim was to prevent the peril of anti-Catholic legislation. Bismarck greatly feared the creation of this party; and even before the Reichstag assembled fifty-six members of the barely constituted Centre did actually repair to Versailles to demand of the new Emperor the re-establishment of the temporal power of the Pope. Bismarck sensed in this young and ardent party a force as yet uncurbed, which might give him much trouble in the future Parliament. He regarded it unfavourably. Already the Protestant, anti-Catholic forces of Germany were in uneasy commotion, and as early as 1865 the Catholic poet Weber complained: "We have entered upon the anti-Christian era; the hatred of every positive creed, and especially of the Catholic religion, because it is the most positive, is incredibly intense."[1] However this may be, the National Liberals were already waging a desperate though clandestine war against the German Catholics, accusing them of being favourable to the French, inventing

[1] See Goyau, *Bismarck et l'Eglise*, vol. i. p. 67.

or magnifying the most trivial facts which might disparage them. Bismarck, however, was anxious before all to unify Germany. So long as Germany's unity was not on a firm foundation, he did not want to annoy the Catholics, even though he might persecute them later in order to "safeguard" the completed work.

Certainly the German victory over France electrified the anti-Catholic forces of Germany. It was in the winter of 1870 that the discussions whence the German Centre was to emerge took place between Savigny, Mallinckrodt, Reichensperger, Windthorst and some others. The danger, indeed, became more and more theatening. It was urgent to guard against it. An appeal was published which was extremely successful—first at the elections to the Prussian Chamber, and then at those to the Reichstag, when sixty-seven members of the Centre were elected. Early in 1871 the newspaper *Germania* was founded in Berlin, as a counterpart of the *Kölnische Volkszeitung*, already famous for its ardent defence of Catholicism.

Differing considerably from the *Katho-*

lische Fraktion of 1852, the Centre of 1871 was not a strictly "confessional" party, but was principally political. It is important to note this fact, for it was to be followed by extraordinary consequences. Its enemies, in order to compromise it, formed a habit of referring to it as the "Catholic Centre," a name which came into general use. At all events, it was and still is understood—

(*a*) That the Centre is the only political party which has defended the Catholic Church and on which the Church could rely.

(*b*) That owing to historical circumstances independent of its will, the Centre was for many years obliged to concentrate its activities upon the religious interests of the Catholics, which were threatened and violated by the Government.

(*c*) That the Centre proposed always to conform in its action, whether positive or negative, with the dogmatic and moral doctrines of the Catholic Church whenever such doctrines might be directly or indirectly involved in any question which was the goal of its Parliamentary action.

This was understood, or at all events inferred, by the whole Catholic world of Germany. The Centre was thus a "confessional" party in principle, since it demanded of all its members the profession of the fundamental truths of Christianity, common to the true members of the Church and to Protestants, and Catholic, in fact, in the sense we have just explained.[1]

As a matter of fact, there are few parties known to history which have deserved so well of Catholicism as did the German Centre when the *Kulturkampf* began.

Having vainly attempted to interest Pius IX in the anticipated dissolution of the Centre, Bismarck allowed matters to drift, and the new party to establish itself. But little by little, at the same time, he allowed the Protestant campaign to grow fiercer. Surrounded by extremely anti-Catholic friends, Bismarck, as early as 1871, had come to regard war upon Catho-

[1] See *Critique du libéralisme* (November 1 and 15, 1911): *Hommes et choses de l'Allemagne catholique*, by E. Barbier, cited by the *Chronique de la Presse*, 1911, p. 781. These two publications endorse the Berlin side of the Berlin-Cologne dispute, as expressing the grievances of Catholicism itself.

licism as consistent with the welfare of the State, and he immediately commenced hostilities.

Every one has read of those eight years of open warfare, during which the Bismarckian fury gave itself full play, and which ended in the victory of the unconquered Centre. Every one learned to honour the great names of Windthorst, Mallinckrodt, Reichensperger, and many another champion of Catholicism persecuted by *Kultur*. Not altogether without reason, their Protestant enemies represented them as the enemies of Germanism, and the authors of a political heresy.

However, these complaints were ineffectual. Germany soon tired of her own fury, and when, in January 1877, the elections to the Reichstag took place, the Centre emerged victorious with ninety-three seats. The National Liberals lost twenty-five seats. Bismarck understood the lesson taught him by Catholics faithful to the Pope, and a year later he went full speed astern. The heroic period was over.

Then, for the Centre, a new era commenced. It was to be characterised, at

first, by victory undisputed; by accession to the councils of the Government; by accession to power also, if only to a secondary place; and by the development of social laws. At the same time the founders of the party, the repositories of its heroism and its traditions, were about to disappear, one after another, and to be replaced by a new generation.

Solidly established in their citadel, having at their disposal a hundred seats, from which nothing could expel them—not even the temporary hostility of Prince von Bülow in 1907—the men of the Centre were often to become the arbiters of the political situation. Victorious, they were about to claim full scope for their social activities.

It was thus that in 1890 the *Volksverein* (People's Union) was founded, a veritable league of propaganda for "Christian Social" reforms.[1] This admirable organisation has often been described. Its centre is at München-Gladbach, near Cologne, and it has some 700,000 members. The *Volks-*

[1] See M. Tavernier in *Le Correspondant* of April 10, 1906.

verein finds its feminine counterpart in the *Katholische Frauenbund*, the "Union of Catholic Women," the central offices of which are in Cologne. From the Syndicalist or Trades Unionist point of view the great "Centrist" organisation is that of the "Christian Syndicates" or "Christian Guilds," founded in 1894, of which we shall have more to say later, and which, with their 450,000 members, are dependent upon Cologne and are under its orders.

Each of these groups possesses numerous newspapers, reviews, bulletins, etc., which have sprung up since 1878.

We have seen how the particularist, and, in the best sense of the word, the Liberal Centre, was Pan-Germanised by its accession to the political control of the Empire. This was about 1900. Politics was not solely responsible for this development; the Centre contained internal factors of change, which we must pass in review. Thanks to these, *Kultur* gained the ascendancy over its will. This is an emphatic expression; yet it is difficult to employ any other, when we see, on the one hand, the ruling ideas of the Catholic leaders inclining to

the side of pure force and Protestantism, and permitting the doctrines of force an ever greater part in their social activities; while, on the other hand, in the political domain, the part of the clergy grows ever smaller, and that of the Protestant members ever greater and greater.

And this is what has happened; not without conflicts, not without protests.

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IV

"Interconfessionalism" and the "Christian Guilds"

Perhaps, to be quite exact, we ought to date the remote beginning of this movement of decadence from 1894. For in 1894 those "mixed or Christian Guilds" were founded which have been the cause of so many quarrels between Berlin and Cologne. The object of constituting these societies was to fight Socialism.[1] How did their founders go to work?

[1] I have it from a sure source that the constitution of the "Christian Guilds" was undertaken at the *express request* of the Kaiser. The successive elec-

"Like the Socialist Trades Unions, the Christian Guilds were to concern them-

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tions to the Reichstag of 1871, 1874, 1877, 1878, 1881, 1884, 1887, 1890 and 1893, showed an incessant increase of Socialist votes (119,386 in 1871, 1,780,989 in 1893: see *Entwicklung der Sozialdemokratie*, by Th. Wacker, Fribourg, 1903). Wilhelm II was greatly alarmed. He deputed one of his confidants to interview the "men of the Centre," who were already almost won over, and to beg them to support him in his struggle against Socialism. Such was the Imperial origin of the "Christian Labour Guilds." According to the instructions of the Kaiser himself, it was a matter of "saving the Empire." Knowing this, it is easier to understand not only the character of these societies, but the entire social activity of the Centre. This activity was less a sincere social or religious policy than a political machination. It is safe to assert that under the personal influence of Wilhelm II the Centre was very soon no more than *one of the numerous organs of Pan-Germanism*. It played its part in the orchestra of these energumens, and that was all. And this was soon visible in Parliament, where the more legitimate Catholic opposition gradually and wilfully relinquished all its influence.

For example, in 1912, at a moment when the Chancellor, who had been recently defeated by a hostile vote in the Reichstag, could not have resisted a second blow, Baron von Hertling changed the *interpellation* concerning the Jesuits, which he had notified, for a *question*, so that the Chamber did not proceed to a vote. This vote would have put the Government in the minority, and although the

selves with questions of labour and wages, and to endeavour to obtain, from the employers, the best possible conditions for the workers; but they were not supposed to meddle with the moral or religious organisation of the workers, as this, it was pretended, was to be left to the 'confessional' Working-men's Clubs, whether Protestant or Catholic. These Christian Labour Guilds promised to respect the religious opinions of their members, but they always professed to be independent of all ecclesiastical authority, so that any positive Church influence was impossible from the first.

"Very soon the *Volksverein* of Catholic Germany and most of the Catholic journals made a general rule of this double organisa-

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German system of government is not really Parliamentary, this fresh manifestation of the disagreement between the Reichstag and the Chancellor must have had the most disturbing consequences.

As docile servants of the Kings of Prussia the deputies of the Centre sacrificed their most essential claims in order not to displease the Kaiser. At the same time they were able to plume themselves before the worthy Catholic elector, who knew nothing of these wheels within wheels, on their praiseworthy activity in the cause of religion.

tion of the workers, and this example was gradually followed by all the great Catholic organisations, and even by their general assemblies." [1]

We know that a great material success resulted from this policy, but it is to be doubted if the moral and religious benefit was equally great.

"One of the warmest supporters of the 'Christian Guilds,' who is at the same time one of the leaders of the Centre—Dr. Karl Bachem—took it upon himself to enlighten us as to the value and meaning of the word 'Christian' in the title and the doctrine of the 'interconfessional' Guilds. 'The word Christian,' says Dr. Bachem, 'is a formula which has no dogmatic meaning; it is a purely political label, intended to render possible the collaboration of Catholics and Protestants in the economic domain.' So the principal purpose of the word is to signify the fact that in those Guilds which bear this label the members are not molested on account of their

[1] *Questions actuelles*, January 11, 1913: *l'Encyclique 'Singulari quadam' et la question des Syndicats chrétiens en Allemagne.*

religious convictions, as occurs every day in the Socialist Unions." [1]

The result obtained was therefore principally negative, and the organisation was really "neutralist." But this "neutralism" was only a phrase; and very soon it became necessary to take sides. This operation did not come about by itself. It is not yet terminated.

In the matter of strikes the attitude of the Christian Guilds differs in no way from that of the Socialist Unions. Both use the strike as "a *normal* means of imposing upon capital ever-increasing ameliorations in favour of labour," [2] without troubling overmuch as to the justice or injustice of each operation. As will be seen, the ideal of force, pure and simple, so sympathetic to *Kultur* and "Germanism," has been swallowed whole.

We will cite only this one typical example to show that Catholicism was not able

[1] *Questions actuelles*, December 9, 1911: "The Catholic Labour Movement in Germany" (an article in the Fribourg *Freiheit*).

[2] *Critique du libéralisme* (*Chronique de la Presse*, 1911, p. 767).

to extend its unconditional patronage to societies so "Germanic" as these Guilds. In 1910 there was published in Berlin a volume by the Abt Windulph, of Berlin, entitled *Christianity and the Christian Guilds*. In this work, which was objective in character, and well "documented," the strongest objections were advanced against these doubtfully Catholic Guilds. As early as 1899, he tells us, the problem had attained such dimensions that a Congress met at Mayence in order to solve it by plainly specifying, in its first resolution, that "the Guilds must be interconfessional, that is, must admit adherents of both confessions, but would take their stand *on the basis of Christianity.*"

Has this object been achieved? Herr Windulph replies in the negative; and merely by consulting the alphabetical index to the volume we shall obtain some idea of the general complaints which may be made against the *Christliche Gewerkschaften*. Opening the volume at hazard, we find that the Christian Guilds "no longer abide by the Mayence programme"; that they are "fighting organisations"; that they "care

nothing for the religious convictions of their members"; that the qualification of "Christians" is a "mere label"; that they have often taken up a position "in opposition to the episcopate"; that they "foment class hatred"; that they associate "with the Socialists in their revolutionary policy," etc., etc.; all these allegations being supported by references which are generally conclusive.

"This simple examination enables us to detach three fundamental defects which are perceptible in these Christian Guilds: their minimisation of dogma, their compounding with Socialism, and their indifference as regards ecclesiastical authority." [1]

Ecclesiastical authority, however, intervened with energy as early as 1900.

"In that year the Conference of the Prussian Bishops, held at Fulda, dealt with the social question, and in a pastoral letter, since known as the Fulda Pastoral,

[1] See *Le Croix* of December 28, 1910: *Catholicisme et interconfessionalisme en Allemagne*, cited in the *Chronique de la Presse*, 1910, p. 784. A complete translation of this famous Pastoral Letter will be found in *Questions actuelles*, vol. lvii. pp. 34–41.

called for labour organisation which should be strictly and openly Catholic."

The Bishops were so indignant with the attitude of the Christian Guilds that they wanted to suppress them, and renounced the idea only in the face of the fiery protests of the Catholic newspapers of Cologne.

The *Kölnische Volkszeitung* in particular, being an organ of the Centre, sided openly with the Guilds, and continued to protect them. The Bishops confined themselves to recalling the principles violated by the Christian Labour Guilds, and made up their minds to tolerate the latter. The members of the Guilds, being good electors, aware of the value of their assistance, failed to abandon the error of their ways.

"In 1901, at the Congress of Crefeld, the Guilds refused to impose on their members the obligation to recognise the positive principles of Christianity."

As M. Giesberts said: "It is impossible that the Catholic and Protestant members of a Guild should be forced by the statutes to recognise the positive principles of Christianity, since, in the two confessions,

these principles are partly in direct opposition, and all are founded on a different religious basis."

"We might cite a number of similar Labour declarations; for certain leaders of the Christian movement have been prodigal of them, and in order to evade the supervision of the ecclesiastical authorities they continually assert that their object is exclusively economic, and, so to speak, *amoral*." [1]

In 1904 the Bishops, once more assembled at Fulda, again expressed their censure of these refractory Guilds. But nothing came of it.

"Their recalcitrant attitude in the face of the episcopal instructions was again startlingly exemplified at the International Trades Union Congress held at Zurich in 1900. It was there that a Labour secretary, Herr Fischer, uttered his famous apostrophe: 'My Lord the Bishops,' he said, 'thus far and no farther! It is your right and your duty to show us the way in religious and ecclesiastical matters,

[1] *Questions actuelles*, December 9, 1911: *Le mouvement ouvrier catholique en Allemagne.*

but when it is a question of purely secular affairs no Bishop has the right to speak to us with authority!'"[1]

However, it was necessary to interpret the Encyclical *Rerum novarum* of Leo XIII. "Far from regretting these irreverent words, or extenuating them by its commentaries, the Press of the Christian Guilds congratulated itself on the declarations made at Zürich, and even surpassed them. It was stated that the 'colleagues' had at last found the *mot juste* in respect of the exaggerations of ecclesiastical authority. 'Neither the Pope nor the Bishops have the right,' said one newspaper, 'to meddle in questions of economics, or to prescribe certain forms of organisation for the workers.' 'The clergy,' wrote another journal, 'has no right to interfere in economic questions.' 'In economic matters,' wrote a third defender of the Christian Guilds, 'we recognise neither the authority of the Pope nor that of the Bishops; *we are our own authority.*'"[2]

Hegel could not have found a better expression of victorious Germanism.

[1] *Questions actuelles*, op. cit. [2] *Ibid.*

Despairing of converting these barbarians to reason, certain Bishops were subsequently in favour of the creation of professional and confessional Unions, purely Catholic, which should be managed from Berlin. They formed diocesan leagues, and worked not only for the material welfare of their members, but for their religious progress. Unhappily these Unions, almost disowned by the Centre and furiously opposed by the "Christian" Guilds, were not able to develop with any energy. They form only a small minority. Force and arrogance are on the side of the "mixed" Unions.

These latter take advantage of and abuse their position. In spite of the repeated favours which the Christian Guilds received at the hands of the Bishops, notably in 1910, when a fresh Conference was held at Fulda, they savagely declared war upon the Bishops, refusing to negotiate with them, and supporting the Socialists against them, trying to starve them out, and accusing them of *hyper-Catholicism*.

The Pope gave his verdict in the matter. In the Encyclical *Singulari quadam* (Sept.

24, 1912) he expressed his preference for the absolutely Catholic Unions, and, while condemning the purely economic motives of the "Christian" Guilds, and issuing a definite order for the creation of purely Catholic Unions wherever this might be possible, he "tolerated," for the time being, the "Christian" Guilds.

This Encyclical was followed by skilful commentaries on the part of almost the whole of the "Centrist" Press, which endeavoured to prove that the "Christian" Guilds had not in any way been censured, and that the *status quo ante* still obtained! These newspapers even taxed themselves to publish a species of counter-encyclicals. At a meeting held at Fribourg in Brisgau, on November 22, Father Wacker, the leader of the Baden Centre,[1] ventured to declare that "the Encyclical was not one of those decisions of the supreme authority of the Church which imply the obligation to believe." On November 23 Herr Trimborn, leader of the Rheinland Centre, at a party meeting held in Cologne, declared,

[1] Placed on the index in 1914 on account of a doctrinal work.

among other things: "There can be absolutely no question of sacrificing the Christian Guilds. I have no doubt that the Christian Guilds will quietly, resolutely, and firmly keep to the line of conduct hitherto followed, and that all those who are interested in the Christian and *National* movement, that is to say, all our people, wish for the utmost success of the Christian Guilds, in the future as in the past. In the competition of labour organisations the decisive and final factor is *practice*, for which reason I have no doubt that the Christian Guilds will retain the *foremost place*, and that *the future belongs to them*." [1]

This is the purest "Germanism."

Matters were still very much in this condition at the moment when the war broke out. The Centre, formerly the adversary of the German State in its defence of Catholic liberties, has come almost openly to oppose the pontifical and episcopal control of Catholicism; this for *national and economic reasons* and *reasons of necessity*.

But it has not reached this point without scission. The majority, recruited from the

[1] *Questions actuelles*, January 11, 1913, p. 43.

so-called Cologne Guilds, remain faithful to what we are obliged to call economic Germanism. The minority, faithful to their religious traditions, look to Berlin for their watchword.[1] For the last ten years, therefore, the German Catholics have thus been divided under two "managements" or leaderships; the Cologne management, which represents the expanded Centre, acting in association with the Protestants, rebellious against the instructions of the Church, and eager before all else to exploit an electoral position which it has not won, but which it intends at all costs to retain; and the Berlin management, which considers itself truly Catholic, is obedient to the Holy See, and is devoted to the eternal interests of religion and the Church. The Berlin party is only a minority, and a minority often persecuted, as we have seen and shall presently see again. In vain, with the late Cardinal Kopp, did they denounce "the corruption

[1] Berlin and Cologne are symbols rather than realities. Many of the "Berlin" leaders live in Cologne, Coblentz, or Trèves. Some of the "Cologne" leaders operate in Berlin.

of Cologne"; [1] Cologne remains the mis-

[1] In connection with this expression, which caused some sensation, I will refer the reader to *Le Croix* for October 15, 1910 (quoted by the *Chronique de la Presse*, 1910, p. 706).

The review *Hochland* (a Cologne publication) contained in November 1909, an article by Dr. Martin Spahn, one of those "men of the Centre" who are more particularly determined to "interconfessionalise" the party, and to make it lose all its religious characteristics. In this article Dr. Spahn, speaking of the League of Catholic Women (*Katholisches Frauenbund*), expressed a desire that this society should help to free the Catholics from "clerical pressure," and allowed it to be understood that it was doing so. The *Frauenbund* protested vigorously (December 4, 1909), asserting "its obedience to the ecclesiastical authorities." Moreover, a lady mentioned in Cardinal Kopp's letter as Frau N—— drew up for the latter a report of some length, intended to allay the suspicions which had been aroused as to the *Frauenbund*. It was on this occasion that the Cardinal, on January 12, 1910, sent to Frau Schalscha, the President of the Union of the Catholic Guilds of women and girls employed in German industries, a confidential letter, in which the tendency to "interconfessionalism" displayed by a section of the German Catholics was severely condemned.

The letter was confidential, but was intended to be shown to a small number of persons who were regarded as safe. This explains the absolute character of its expressions. By the most deplorable indiscretion it was published, and reproduced by the *Berliner Tageblatt* for October 8, 1914, in the hope of creating political and religious difficulties in the

tress of the Centre, if we can grace by the same name the group founded by Windt-

German Centre, which was already divided on this point. Let us see what the Cardinal—whose authority was considerable—had to say. In order to understand the following passage, the reader must be aware of the existence of the two women's societies mentioned therein : the *Frauenbund* of Cologne, suspected of "interconfessionalism," and the Catholic Union of Women Industrial Operatives, of Berlin, of which Frau Schalscha is the President—

"What pleases me least in the report (submitted by Frau N——) is the bitter criticisms addressed to the *Women's Industrial Unions* of Berlin. For a long time I have striven to protect the *Women's Industrial Unions* of Berlin, as those of Breslau, from the *infection of the West.* Already, it seems to me, the interconfessionalism of the Labour Movement is too prevalent, and to introduce it among the female workers would provoke a *dilution of the Catholic conscience* throughout the whole of the working classes. This is why I wished the *Women's Industrial Unions* to be definitely Catholic. If they are not willing to be Catholic let them cease to call themselves Catholic, let them cease to pass as being Catholic. This is the case with the Berlin societies.

"How is the West affecting this organisation? Out of pure opportunism, merely to increase the strength of the 'interconfessional' Unions, it was driven in the direction of the Guilds. What is the attitude of the *Frauenbund?* Does it favour this movement? Does it approve of it and patronise it? This, alas ! is a question which is not yet cleared up. How far the *Frauenbund* has taken the part of the interconfessional movement we have, quite recently

horst and von Ketteler and that which exists to-day, affording unconditional sup-

again, read in statements intended for the public. What has the *Frauenbund* done to cleanse itself from this suspicion? Its declarations in respect of Spahn's assertion are more than regrettable; they constitute an admission, and only the foolish will seek to conceal the evil which has been laid bare. And in the West they are still asking for our confidence! We want to keep our hands and our consciences clean. We will not contribute to the stifling of Catholic feeling. We will not feed the workers, whether male or female, on class hatred, nor do we wish to prepare them for class conflicts or for violence, in order to drive them into Socialism.

"Does not Frau N—— read the newspapers? Has she not read what Herr Effert, the secretary of the Christian Guild, said recently? Even for the Socialists this sincerity was exaggerated.

"Such is the position of affairs, and such is the criterion by which we judge what comes to us from the West. I see it always in its true character. Once more, in the autumn of last year (1909), I attempted to effect at least an external reconciliation. *Everything failed before the truly heretical fanaticism which prevails in the West on the subject of the social problem.* The West does not want our confidence. It is sufficiently prudent to put its ideas into practice at home. Wherever I am responsible I shall do my utmost to keep it at a distance. *As for my confidence, I can give it neither to the principles nor to the tactics of the West.*"

The gravity of such assertions escaped no one. *Germania* shows that Cardinal Kopp was not alone in complaining of the "interconfessional" tendencies

port to every violation of justice and all the coalitions of violence.

It is not only in connection with social questions that the Catholic decadence of the Centre asserts and exposes itself. The very principle of the party, its *raison d'être*, and its originality are questioned by its more active leaders. Of old the Centre fought and suffered for the salvation of German Catholicism. For more than fifteen years its new leaders have sought to employ it, for what? To *declericalise* Catholic Germany. The Centre has become, so to speak, an ally of Protestantism against Catholicism. There is the result of its penetration by *Kultur*. The process deserves to be examined in greater detail.

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of Catholic Germany. It cites certain passages of Cardinal Fischer's last Pastoral Letter (he is since dead and has been replaced in the See of Cologne by Cardinal von Hartmann). In this he deplores the ravages of interconfessionalism. "Do not let us blush at the title of Catholic," says the Archbishop of Cologne; "do not let us avoid it."

V

The Declericalisation of the Centre

We have carefully explained that in its very origin the Centre, composed of Catholics, was not strictly a *Catholic party*. This position, not so much ambiguous as inconvenient, was bound to become untenable as soon as the leaders should show signs of being actuated by the spirit which we have already seen as prevailing in the Guild disputes.

Social problems led to violent and regrettable discussions in the once united and prosperous Centre, and almost at the same time a violent and still more significant political and religious quarrel broke out, which shook it to its very principles and foundations.

A new generation, which had played no part in the glorious battles of the *Kulturkampf*, eager before all for tangible and material success in the political domain, commenced in 1900 to put forward a series of audacious claims which aimed at nothing else than the subordination of the Centre to purely temporal ends, at the risk

—which was recklessly accepted—of causing it to lose all religious individuality. The more active leaders of the party even maintained energetically that the Centre ought to take part in a campaign directed against the ascendancy of the Catholic hierarchy. Having become the ally of *Kultur*, it was now the mission of the Centre to combat Ultramontanism, to "declericalise" Catholic Germany, and to make the party more and more "interconfessional." Here again, despite the most legitimate protests, this tendency finally prevailed, and the traditional representatives of the party had to make way for the usurpers.

One man, Herr Martin Spahn, played a capital part in this development. M. Prüm names him expressly as one of the factors for evil which he deplores. Who, then, is this Herr Dr. Spahn?

"Herr Martin Spahn, son of Herr Peter Spahn, leader of the Prussian Centre, had for some time drawn attention to himself by a number of historical or political works which displayed a spirit of profound disdain of and sullen hostility toward Catholi-

cism. In his doctor's thesis, and above all in his monograph on Johannes Cochlaeus, he speaks with enthusiasm of the "Reformer," whom he calls "the greatest German of his time." [1]

Professor in the University of Strasbourg, Dr. Spahn made the most unexpected use of his authority. "As early as 1898 he offered his collaboration to the apostate Graf von Hoensbroech, an ex-Jesuit, then the director of the *Tägliche Rundschau,* in his struggle against 'Ultramontanism in Catholicism.'"

In 1913, in the Viennese review *Die Fackel,* he published an article which attained some notoriety, in which he maintained that "Catholicism and Protestantism are of equal value," that "the one admirably completes the other," and that they ought to form close understanding with one another. This was not his only digression. Since 1913 Dr. Spahn has at intervals proclaimed the necessity of "*declericalising*" the political, social, and literary movements of the German Catholics:

[1] *Critique du libéralisme* (*Chronique de la Presse,* 1911, p. 794).

that is, the party of the Centre, the *Volksverein*, the *Frauenbund*, the Christian Labour Guilds, and the *Hochland*. His by no means respectful biography of Leo XIII will be remembered. Above all, he has often made the most disconcerting proposals in respect of questions vital to the policy of the Centre. He pleaded for resignation as regards the religious aspect of the educational question; while as for the Polish problem he was in favour of the absorption of the Poles by the German mass.

All these precedents, which show Dr. Spahn in open and systematic opposition to the feelings and even the faith of the Catholics, did not prevent him from presenting himself as deputy to the electoral ward of Warburg-Hoexter (Westphalia), when it was necessary to find a "Centrist" candidate to replace the defunct Herr Schmitz in the Reichstag.

Dr. Spahn's candidature excited a painful sense of amazement in many Catholics, and among the "Centrist" deputies in the Reichstag. Fourteen of the latter addressed a letter to Dr. Spahn, dated August 22,

1910, in which they invited him to withdraw his candidature. This letter was much criticised in Cologne; the Cologne "Centrists" were evidently greatly interested in the presence of Dr. Spahn in the Reichstag. And it was a fact that "interconfessionalism" (or actually "aconfessionalism"), democratic Liberalism and anti-Romanism found a perfect representative in Dr. Spahn.

"Dr. Spahn understood all this only too well, and he would not desist. He was elected according to orders, but by 4000 votes less than his predecessor.

"He was yet to be officially admitted to the Centre. A strong opposition declared itself among the truly Catholic deputies; they could not endure the idea of such an addition to their ranks, which by the very force of things ratified a provocation and an affront to Rome and to Catholic Germany." [1]

The "Cologne management" did everything to ensure the success of its candidate. The Vatican was dealt with, and uneasy

[1] *Critique du libéralisme* (*Chronique de la Presse*, 1911, p. 794).

consciences were reassured. The Centre assembled in November 1910 to deliberate upon the admission of Dr. Martin Spahn. A lively discussion ensued. Graf Oppersdorff vigorously opposed it; among those who pleaded no less warmly for his admission were Mgr. Hitze of the *Volksverein*, Mgr. Fahrenbach, Herr Bachem, director of the *Kölnische Volkszeitung*, and Herr von Hertling, leader of the Bavarian Centre. This last "announced that the Chairman had thoroughly considered the question of Dr. Spahn's admission; that Dr. Spahn declared himself in favour of the confessional school; that he refused to recognise as truly his the opinions attributed to him by *Die Fackel;* finally, that he regretted his relations with Hoensbroech, since they had shocked the Catholics. In consequence, the Chairman was in favour of Dr. Spahn's admission."

"However, by a cunning calculation, in order to allay excitement and lull suspicion, it was proposed that Dr. Spahn should be induced to sign a declaration of orthodoxy. His friends drafted it; he appended his signature. He had been

promised that it should not be published. But his supporters wished to be able to inform Rome that he had given the desired guarantees. The pill hardly swallowed (according to Dr. Spahn's admission), Rome and the Romans were enabled to read in the newspapers that Dr. Spahn, in an interview, declared that he had retracted nothing. A fresh alarm. The Centre assembled and declared that it regarded these declarations of Dr. Spahn's as null and void. And all was well again . . . according to the ideas of Cologne." [1]

Such is the explanation of the facts as set forth by Berlin. For we hasten to remark that the objectivity of this statement is perhaps only comparative. A "man of Cologne" would accuse it of "Berlin subjectivism." A "man of Berlin," on the other hand, would regard it as the expression of the truth. It is not our business to choose between them.

Where we shall exercise a choice is in the matter of the activity displayed by Dr. Spahn, the signatory, since the war, with

[1] *Critique du libéralisme* (*Chronique de la Presse*, 1911, p. 794).

seven other Catholics, of the manifesto of the ninety-three "Intellectuals." Quite recently (in May 1914) he issued a pamphlet through the publishers of the *Volksverein*, at München-Gladbach, entitled *Im Kampf um unsere Zukunft*, "The Fight for our Future." This is a national-immoralist effort. It begins by declaring that "it is the glory of States and nations that they cannot achieve external objects without sanguinary collisions (*ohne auf blutigen Widerstand zutreffen*). Such is the tone of this pamphlet, which is represented by its author as *a contribution to the education of the German people.* In the first chapter Dr. Spahn deals with *France.* He recalls the struggle of more than a thousand years which the two countries have waged against one another on the left bank of the Rhine, the present stake, and he considers that Germany, if defeated, would be thrown back upon the right bank. For this reason, disposing with a wave of the hand of the arguments of certain Germans who would "spare" Catholic France, he, the "man of the Centre," declares that "France must be hurled to the ground, so that she shall

cease once and for all to entertain any designs whatsoever upon Central Europe." In his second chapter (on Austria and Russia) Spahn the Catholic casts amorous glances at orthodox Russia, confining himself to expelling her from the Balkans. In his third chapter, on the other hand, he annihilates England, the country of religious liberty, so hospitable to the victims of the *Kulturkampf*. The fourth and last chapter proposes the eventual exercise of a stable world-policy by Protestant Germany. In closing, Dr. Spahn exalts unending war, in which he sees the only source of progress.

Progress, according to Dr. Spahn, *is only possible on condition that war is unbridled, on condition that it knows no limits either in space or in procedure.* The more bloody it is, the more efficacious. Herr Erzberger, as we see, is not alone in his way of thinking. Is this the language of a Catholic? [1]

But let us return to Dr. Spahn's friends,

[1] We have already commented upon the incessant repetition of this dogma. Like true Germans, Dr. Spahn and Herr Erzberger are only repeating the words of such predecessors as flatter their Germanism—which is only their egoism.—B.M.

to those who opened the gates of the "Tower" to him. We have spoken of Herr Bachem. This is what is thought of him by the "Berlin management"—

"A long time ago Julius Bachem was a deputy in the Prussian Landtag. Private reasons forced him to resign. This misadventure, instead of breaking him, freed him from the risks and difficulties of election. As a journalist he became a leader with ideas, and finally a master of men.

"Julius Bachem had realised that with a disciplined or 'regimented' environment such as Catholic Germany on the morrow of the Bismarckian *Kulturkampf*, it was possible to dominate it by dominating the leaders of the organisation. To this enterprise he devoted his resourceful talents. He completely succeeded. His Labour Unions, his clubs, his newspapers and reviews, enforce the party watchword from Cologne.[1]

"We know this watchword; and Herr Bachem has often expatiated upon it, notably in 1906, in the *Historisch-Politische*

[1] *Critique du libéralisme* (*Chronique de la Presse*, 1911, p. 794).

Blätter, in an article entitled 'We must emerge from the Tower.' The 'Tower,' as we know, is the Centre, called by Windthorst 'The Tower of Ivory' on account of its Catholic composition.

"Herr Bachem wanted to 'interconfessionalise' the Centre. But in what way? If he had merely demanded that the Centre should admit a larger number [1] of Protestant deputies having the sincere intention of respecting and supporting its programme, and the desire to be elected by Protestants, this would have been accepted by all or nearly all the Catholics. But Herr Bachem wished generously to *cede* as many as fifty seats to the Protestant deputies, and these—note this well—the safest seats in the Centre. In this way, he said, the Centre would prove that it 'was not a confessional party.'

"Herr Bachem's article caused a great deal of commotion. Many voices were raised in protest, but the discussion was

[1] From the outset it was recognised that the Centre might admit Protestants to its ranks as *guests* (*Hospitanten*). Their number was always small. For example, in 1907, among 109 deputies of the Centre, there was only one *Hospitant*.

lacking in clearness. It was above all necessary to decide whether the Centre was a Catholic and 'confessional' party, and in what sense.

"On April 13, 1909, which was Easter Tuesday, ten persons, the deputies Bitter and Roeren, Father Schopen, Father Frick, S.J., etc., met in Cologne for a *private* conversation, during which the questions which were at that time troubling Catholic opinion and even Catholic consciences were to be amicably discussed.

"They came to an agreement on two points: (1) The Centre is a Catholic party, whose activity is in conformity with Catholic doctrine; (2) It would be desirable that the *Volksverein* should place themselves under the authority of the Bishops.

"The matter should have remained secret until the moment when the ten deputies thought fit to make it known to the public. But the imprudence of one of them and the indiscretion of an outside person brought the matter to the knowledge of Herr Julius Bachem, the leader of the 'declericalising' movement.

"Thereupon was commenced a campaign

in the Catholic Press enlisted by him, or at least for his cause, under the orders of his *Kölnische Volkszeitung*. The members of the Conference were accused of misrepresenting the nature of the Centre, and of making it appear to be a 'confessional' party, which could only plunge it into difficulties with all the other parties; the latter would have the best of rights to say that the Centre was a foreign body in the living flesh of Germany, because it regarded everything from its 'confessional' point of view, which thought not of the welfare of the country, but of the welfare of the Church, and because in all its activities it allowed itself to be guided by the orders of Rome,[1] etc. . . ."

This serious question has been left unsolved. The Cologne management asserts that the Centre is a political party with a *Christian* basis, but it leaves us to understand that this Christianity comprises "only the doctrines common to Protestants and Catholics, a sort of super-Christianity, without any precise creed."

[1] *Critique du libéralisme* (*Chronique de la Presse*, op. cit., 1911).

"The conversation of Easter Tuesday (April 13, 1909) had its sequel in the very heart of the Centre. The two deputies Bitter and Roeren, after a great deal of discussion, were obliged to sign a declaration stating that the Centre was not a confessional but a political party, which pursued its political objects on the basis of the Constitution of the Empire" (November 28, 1909).[1]

Kultur thus won all along the line, in the sense that the new policy of the Centre favoured Protestantism. Malicious persons recalled the fact that about 1835 Herr Bachem's grandfather had taken pains, on the occasion of some festival, to decorate his house with a carefully illuminated bust of Luther.

These tendencies were henceforth to crop up on all sides in the de-Catholicised Centre. In 1911 the party joined the Liberals and Socialists in order to give Alsace-Lorraine non-sectarian schools. The Catholics themselves began gradually to regard the Centre as a peril, at least, for so long as it should

[1] *Critique du libéralisme* (*Chronique de la Presse*, op. cit., 1911).

obey the instructions of Cologne. Abt Schopen, one of the members of the Conference of Easter Tuesday, even published a book entitled: *Cologne, the Internal Danger to German Catholicism.*

But Cologne had become the Centre itself, to such a point that the adversaries of its declericalising and secularising tendencies found themselves expelled from the Party.

This is what happened to Graf Oppersdorff at the time of the 1912 elections. He was erased from the list of the candidates for the Centre, as a punishment for opposing the candidature of Martin Spahn and the policy of Cologne. However, he was elected in another constituency.

Why did the Centre thus reject the assistance of well-known Catholics, its traditional supporters, even though they might be, like Graf von Oppersdorff, a little inclined to blunder and give trouble? It was out of consideration for Protestantism, the instrument of *Kultur*. In November 1911 (the elections followed in January), " the Committee of the Conservative section of the Reichstag was said to have sent the Centre an ultimatum, according to which

there was to be an end of 'hyper-Catholicism,' or else the Conservative section would break off all relations with the Centre. The Conservative section was compelled to take up this position on account of the Evangelical League." [1]

The case of Graf von Oppersdorff was not unique. Other sincere Catholics were excluded at the same time; for example, Herr Bitter and Herr Fleischer, both thoroughgoing supporters of the traditional Catholic Centre.

"There was still one member of the Centre who caused Herr Bachem and his staff a great deal of anxiety. This was Herr Roeren, sometime Councillor of the Superior Court of Appeal at Cologne. Certain demagogues—who in Germany are only too often employed to carry out the orders of the leaders of the political and social movement of 'interconfessionalisation'—certain demagogues, at the moment of the elections, had endeavoured to deprive him of his mandate; without success,

[1] *Correspondence de Cologne*, cited in a letter from Berlin to *L'Action française*, April 28, 1912, cited also in the *Chronique de la Presse*, 1912, p. 320.

however, as the electors in Herr Roeren's constituency of Sarrelouis-Sarrebourg refused to give these seductive agents a hearing. However, they managed to make things very difficult for Herr Roeren, despite his remarkable merits as founder and propagator of the League against Public Immorality; so that, weary of the vexations and annoyances of which he was the victim, he preferred to resign his double mandate to the Diet of the Empire and the Prussian Chamber, retiring into private life in March 1912." [1]

M. Prüm, in his letter to Herr Erzberger, mentions the case of Herr Roeren as particularly painful. Herr Roeren, for that matter, explained to the Catholics of the whole world, and especially to the German Catholics, " why he left the Centre." This is the title of one of two little works written by Herr Roeren on this painful subject. The author sadly proves to us that the points of contact between Catholicism and the modern Centre are daily becoming fewer. For four years the *Kölnische Volks-*

[1] Letter from Berlin to *La Croix* of November 20, 1913 (*Chronique de la Presse*, 1913, p. 783).

zeitung has not ceased to abuse this excellent Catholic.

A similar adventure befell Prince von Loewenstein in the melancholy affair of the *Windthorstbunde*.

"The leaders of the *Windthorstbunde*, the Windthorst Clubs, which form a sort of school and recruiting-ground for the party, cared no more for the opinions of the Bishops than do the present leaders of the Centre. Up to 1903 the *Windthorstbunde* had been openly Catholic in character; at this date they were 'interconfessionalised' by the General Assembly in Cologne. In 1907, at the Wiesbaden Assembly, the *Bunde* of Breslau and Essen sought to repeal this resolution; and it was the patron of the *Windthorstbunde* himself, Prince von Loewenstein, now a Dominican priest, who undertook this task. 'I should deserve,' he said, 'to be shown ignominiously to the door if in my quality as patron I did not do my utmost to maintain the Catholic character of the *Windthorstbunde*.' In vain: the Essen-Breslau resolution was defeated. Then the Prince withdrew his patronage, stating that the resolution which

had been adopted had transfixed his heart. He quitted the Assembly, to return on the following day, when he announced that all the Bishops of Germany, without exception, *desired* that the *Windthorstbunde* should remain Catholic. He was informed, in reply, that a *resolution* took precedence of a mere *desire*." [1]

This is how a party is " de-Catholicised."

On the very eve of the war two very remarkable events occurred which proved to what a point the Centre, as it submitted to the suggestions of Cologne, had ceased to maintain effective relations with Catholicism, although still professing to serve it.

The first of these instances concerns a declaration drafted by the " National Commission of the German Centre," dated February 8, 1914, which all members of the Party had to sign on pain of expulsion.

Very long and finely spun, this declaration cannot be reproduced here in its entirety. Here is the striking analysis of this document which was published by a Belgian Catholic newspaper on April 4 of the same year—

[1] Letter from Berlin to *La Croix* of November 20, 1913 (*Chronique de la Presse*, 1913, p. 783).

"The Centre is not a 'confessional' party. It is not a Catholic party. But the Catholics must belong to the party of the Centre; they cannot form a party of their own. And they must submit to the policy of the Centre—to its religious policy, to begin with. And if they feel, as conscientious Catholics, that this policy will not do, they must keep silence in the name of unity and obey it for the sake of discipline—the discipline of the non-Catholic party of the Centre. And if they become restive, impelled by their 'clerical' scruples, they are expelled from the party, with all the moral and material sequels of such expulsion in general, and with those peculiar to Catholic Germany.

"We make no comment." [1]

But this is not all. There is better to come.

"There exists in Germany a great Association of the Catholic Press, the 'St. Augustin Society for the Protection of the Catholic Press' — *Augustinus-Verein zur Pflege der Katholischen Presse.*

[1] *Correspondance Catholique* of Gand (cited in the *Chronique de la Presse*, 1914, p. 259). This journal adopts the Berlin point of view.

"This is plain enough, is it not? We have here not the non-confessional Centre; no inter-confessional Guilds; but the 'Catholic Press.'

"How simple we are! This title is printed in big letters at the head of circulars, to ensure that no one shall establish another Association of the Catholic Press. But in the text of the circulars, by a sleight of hand as audacious as it is habitual, the word 'Catholic' is smuggled away and replaced by the word 'Centrist.' The result? But this is obvious: the members of the *Augustinus-Verein* must *as such* subscribe to the declaration of the Centre, on pain of expulsion from 'St. Augustin's Society for the Protection of the . . . Catholic . . . Press.'"[1]

This is how a Belgian Catholic journalist, four months before the war, appreciated the positions of Catholicism in its relations with the Centre. Involuntarily he drew a comparison between this almost anti-Catholic declaration and the anti-Modernist

[1] *Correspondance Catholique* of Gand (cited in the *Chronique de la Presse*, 1914, p. 259).

declaration which was so ill received in Germany. The Centre had reached the stage of expelling from its midst the sincerest Catholics, for love of Protestantism and *Kultur*.

The results of such an attitude are set forth by M. Prüm. He denounces the journals of the *Augustinus-Verein* for their furious attacks upon the Catholics of Belgium. They had begun by practising upon the Catholics of Germany.

The second event we have to mention is the condemnation by the Index, on June 3, 1914, of Abt Theodor Wacker, for an address on "The Centre and Ecclesiastical Authority," which was included in the pamphlet *Gegen die Quertreiber*,[1] published at Essen, 1914.

The Abt Wacker, curate of Zoehringen (in the arch-diocese of Fribourg in Baden), a leading member of the Centre in Baden, was the semi-official inspiration of the social doctrines of the Centre. We have no space to reproduce the analysis of his work as published by the *Quaderni Romani*

[1] "Against the Makers of Trouble."

of June 21, 1914.[1] If our readers will refer to this they will see what a gulf exists between his assertions and the pontifical instructions! It would be difficult to contradict them more directly than this avowed "Centrist" has done.

About the same time a German Franciscan published a volume on *Union in Faith*, in which he made some very melancholy assertions. In Germany Catholicism has lost its keenness, its spirit of conquest. The Protestants are almost alone in acting "confessionally."

One of those courageous reviews which were founded not long ago to fight in the name of Catholicism against the doctrines of Cologne,[2] the *Petrus-Blätter* of Trèves, relates a curious anecdote in this connection in its issue for June 2, 1914—

A few years ago Herr Buchholz sent to an important "Centrist" newspaper an

[1] Reproduced by the *Chronique de la Presse*, 1914, p. 465.

[2] It is curious to observe that since 1910 many *Catholic* reviews have been founded to make open war upon the Centre. Besides the *Petrus-Blätter* we may mention the *Stände-Ordnung* (Coblentz) and *Klarheit und Wahrheit* (Berlin).

article speaking of the duty incumbent upon Catholics to persuade their Protestant fellow-countrymen to come over to the true faith, and he urged that a movement to this end should be undertaken. The "Centrist" newspaper refused to insert the article, with the remark that the idea was excellent, but that "this would bring us into conflict with the management of the party." The author sent the article to a weekly paper; there also it was refused with the two words: "Regret impossibility."

"So it is the management of the Centre, seconded by the *Augustinus-Verein*, which prevents any movement for the propagation of Catholicism among Protestants. Yet this is by no means a question of a political movement, but of a purely religious undertaking." [1]

"This tells us much," says the Roman editor, "of the mental condition of the Centre." The war will have enabled us to consider in a light as yet unknown the results of this opportunist state of mind,

[1] See *Quaderni Romani*, June 21, 1914, cited in the *Chronique de la Presse*, 1914, p. 465.

which cares for nothing but material prosperity, for power, by whatever means acquired, for *Kultur*, in a word, and for Germanism.

However, we should be greatly mistaken were we to exaggerate the benefits which the Centre has derived from its complaisance toward the Protestants; were we to regard it as able to rule and to lay down the law. The services which the Centre has rendered the evangelical Empire are greater than the benefits which it receives. The position of the Catholics and of Catholicism has not been greatly improved by the Centre; it is not so greatly superior to the state of subjection to which Bismarck reduced it. It is Protestantism which calls the tune in Germany. In Germany Catholics are only "citizens of the second class." The Reichstag has for the last three years resounded with such complaints, and the least respectable members of the Centre have echoed them—Herr Rost and Herr Bachem among others. With documents to hand, with statistics at their disposal, the German Catholics have been forced sadly to declare that the percentage of Catholic officials of

all kinds, in the administrations and universities, and of officers in the army, is far from corresponding with the importance of Catholicism and the number of Catholics in the Empire. The various Chancellors have never confided a portfolio to a Catholic. In Bavaria, a country almost entirely Catholic, this partiality verges on the scandalous; the great majority of the Ministers are Protestant. What are we to think of a party whose collaboration is so onesided [1] and its vanity so great?

However this may be, what we have just written will enable the reader to form a fairly clear idea of the intellectual and moral environment which gave birth to M. Prüm's pamphlet, as well as to the old anxieties which are expressed therein. All these arise from the misdeeds of Germanism, the avowed corrupter of the Centre.

* * * * *

[1] We have just learned (May 1915) that Mgr. Benzler, the German Bishop of Metz, has now forbidden in his diocese the worship of Joan of Arc, approved by the Church, and has also placed his Cathedral at the disposal of the Protestants, that these latter may hold their services in it.

VI

The Danger to Catholicism is in Germany

It is no new thing, this warning of the serious dangers to which Germanism has exposed the Catholic doctrine and the influence of the Church. These dangers are of two kinds: *theoretical*, in so far as they affect dogma, thought, and intellect; *practical*, in so far as they urge the Governments to anti-clericalism.

In his recent article,[1] which we have already cited, Canon Gaudeau justly remarks that it is only since Luther's days that there have been two Germanies, two Austrias, two Frances; these Catholic, and those corrupted by the Reformation, and by this fact given over to modern anti-clericalism, individualism, materialism, revolutionary socialism, atheism, and all the disorders of modern thought. In his magnificent lectures on the part of Germany in modern philosophy, soon to be published

[1] *Le danger pour l'Eglise est en Allemagne*, in *Le Foi Catholique*, April–May 1915.

in book form, M. Jacques Maritain, with even greater force, describes, generation by generation, century by century, the growth, since Luther's time, of this disintegrating Germanism, which is to-day poisoning Europe wherever Europe is poisoned. He puts a label upon each of the errors of our time, and this label is German.[1]

What are we to say of the practical and subterranean activity exercised in Europe, and above all in France, by Germanic statesmen, for the last forty-four years? The confessions of Mme. Juliette Adam, recently brought fully to light by M. Goyau, prove to satiety that French anti-clericalism is of immediate German origin. Bismarck was the real stage-manager of French anti-clericalism; it was he who initiated this lamentable movement in France. It is historically proved that in 1874 Bismarck personally intervened with the French

[1] See, too, the latest work of Father A. M. Weiss, professor at Fribourg, *Liberalismus und Christentum*, Trèves, 1914, Petrus-Verlag. In the appendix, "A Glance Back upon a Life of Labour directed against Liberalism," the apologist of Christianity relates in detail all the insults and outrages to which he has been subjected in Germany.

Ambassador in Berlin, M. de Gontaut-Biron, in order to obtain anti-Catholic measures from the French Government. "As early as January 13, 1874, he was begging Gontaut to come to see him, and was demanding that France should undertake some definite action against the Bishops."

In the following year he attacked the Pope himself, and wished to organise an international crusade against him, in which France was to play an important part: "Pius IX, had Europe obeyed Bismarck, would have been erased, in 1874 and 1875, from the list of sovereigns; embassies and legations would have closed their doors, and would have left him alone, face to face with the Quirinal." Conservative France resisted Bismarck then; but he finally found his man (1876). Gambetta had neither the foresight nor the courage to resist the Bismarckian invitations, and it was at the Chancellor's orders that he engaged France in that anti-clerical policy which was to have such a great and grievous success. "Ah, my dear friend!" confided Spuller to Mme. Edmond Adam, "how many times have I told you, and told you

again, not to applaud, in Gambetta's speeches, his anti-clerical sallies! You see to-day: anti-clericalism led him to Bismarck and Bismarck to him. *Beware of anti-clericalism: it is Prussian!*" [1]

Yes, anti-clericalism is Prussian, and the victory of the Allies will be its defeat.[2] This will not suit the formerly Catholic Centre and its deluded admirers. The Allies, in the overthrow of Christianity, provoked by Germany and her methods, are doing their best to safeguard the vener-

[1] See Georges Goyau, *Bismarck et l'Église: Le Culturkampf*, vol. ii. chaps. viii., ix., x. Dreux, *Dernières années de l'ambassade Gontaut-Biron:* "If Bismarck is not the inventor of the word 'clericalism,'" writes Gontaut, "it is he who has been its most adroit and indefatigable vulgariser," p. 279. Mme. Juliette Adam, *Nos amitiés politiques après l'abandon de la revanche*, p. 439. Hohenlohe, *Denkwürdigkeiten*, p. 186. Jacques Bainville, *Bismarck et la France;* M. de Roux, *La Ripublique de Bismarck.*

[2] This is the opinion of Señor Miguel de Unamuno, sometime Rector of the University of Salamanca; the most interesting of modern Spanish writers. "What is at stake, in my opinion, is nothing less than *the future of Christian law, and of Christianity even*, which is threatened at its foundations by the paganism of this *Realpolitik of Kultur.*" (Cited by Imbart de la Tour in his suggestive pamphlet *L'Opinion catholique et la guerre.*) *Pages actuelles*, No. 26.

able relics of the old Christian law, the foundation of civilisation.

More than once we have asked ourselves what Windthorst and his friends would have thought of the sanguinary adventure into which Wilhelm II has hurled the Old World; what they would think of their degenerate successors, the Erzbergers and Spahns. Yes, what would Windthorst say on perceiving amid his flock these worshippers of force and these preachers of violence?

Windthorst, without a doubt, would speak as M. Prüm has spoken. No one, in Germany, whether in the Catholic camp or the Protestant, has perceived anything exaggerated in Herr Erzberger's sanguinary philippics against the adversaries of Germany. *Deutschland über alles!* But Windthorst has found in Luxembourg a disciple to defend the chosen stronghold of Catholicism, who magnanimously reminds the Centre of the eternal precepts of the Gospel, which that once Catholic party has betrayed for *Kultur*.

* * * * *

THE END

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